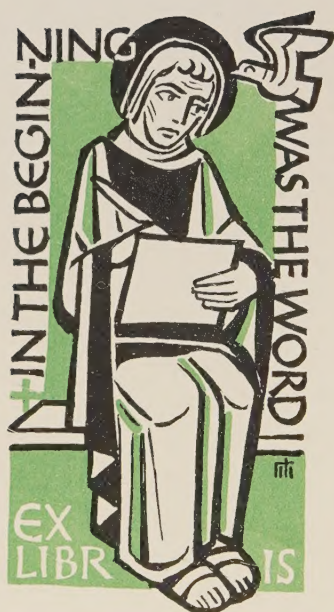


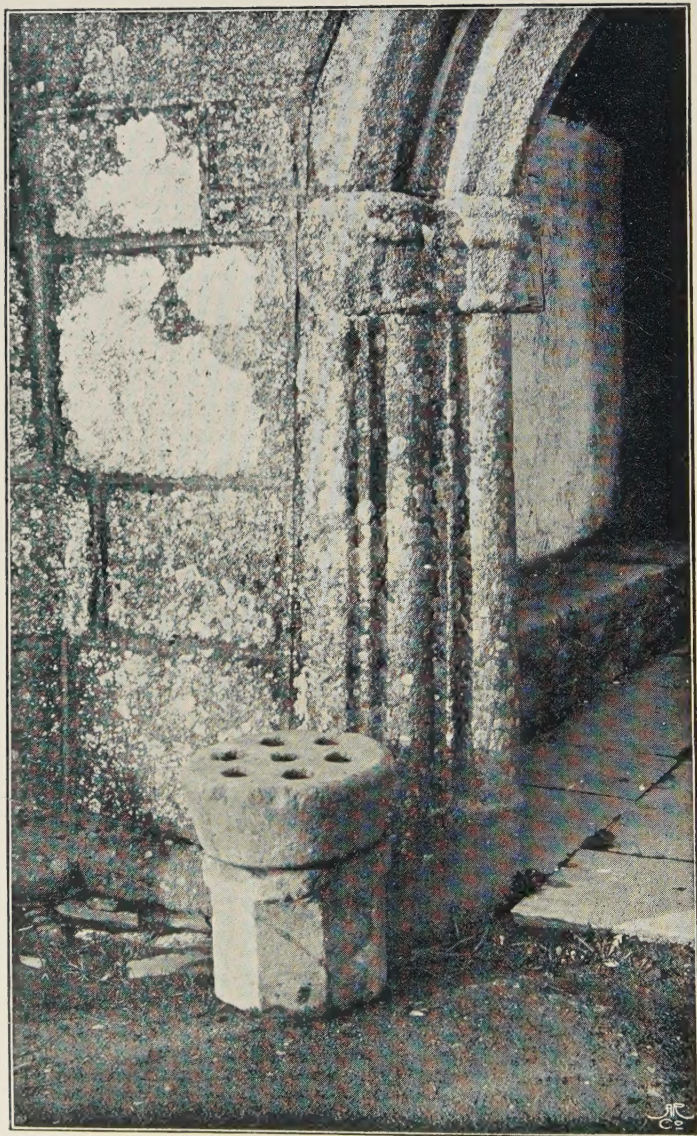


Michael G. Mayer

OLD CHURCH LIFE.



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CRESSET STONE, LEWANNICK CHURCH.

W. P. Carey.

Old

Church Life.

Edited by

William Andrews.

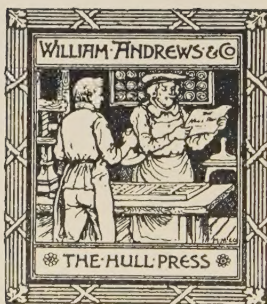


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Preface.

THIS volume is similar in style to my other works relating to the Church of England, and I hope it will merit a welcome equally favourable from the public and the press. I am grateful to several students of old-time subjects who have kindly assisted me with contributions.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

THE HULL PRESS,

August 11th, 1899.

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OLD CHURCH LIFE.

Courts held in Churches.

“ONE of the most remarkable characteristics of English architecture,” says Mr. Fergusson, “though it is but a negative one, is the almost total absence of any municipal buildings during the whole period of the Middle Ages.” This great authority on architecture mentions the Guildhall in the city of London as a late specimen of that class of buildings, and also some municipal buildings at Bristol, and “one or two unimportant town halls in the cities,” probably referring to the old guild-halls of Oxford and Chichester, which were among the oldest buildings of the kind in the kingdom. In the early ages of municipal institutions in this country, the meetings of the sokemen were held in the open air, and usually in the parish churchyard. Anthony à Wood tells us in the second volume of his *Archæologia Oxonensis*, that the municipal assembly of the burgesses

of Oxford was held, in the reign of Henry II., in St. Martin's churchyard. The proverbial changefulness of the weather in this country may be supposed to have soon suggested the greater suitability of the church itself for this purpose ; and there are old records in existence which show, as a matter of fact, that the parish churches were, for a long time, regularly used for municipal and other meetings of a public or semi-public character.

The reason for this state of things is self-evident. There was, as a rule, no other building suitable for the purpose ; and no consideration of the sacred character of the edifice would be likely to prevent the church from being so used in times when churches, and even cathedrals, were used for so many other secular purposes. For instance, we find that, in 1358, public dinners in churches were forbidden at Exeter ; and it may reasonably be assumed that no such edict would have been issued if the sacred edifices in that city had not been converted to such "base uses." Greathead, Bishop of Lincoln, ordered that markets should not be held in churches, "seeing that the Lord cast out from the Temple those who bought and sold." In 1504, executorial accounts were audited

in St. Mary's Church, Bury St. Edmunds; and the York Rolls show that in 1510 pedlars were allowed, on feast days, to sell their wares in the porch. From Mr. William Smith's "Morley, Ancient and Modern," we learn that the nave of St. Mary's Church, in that town, which was erected about 1560, was used for some time as a tithe barn for the lord of the manor. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, legal business was frequently transacted in the south porch of Ecclesfield Church, "the Minster of the Moors," midway between Sheffield and Barnsley. The "walks in Paul's" were a promenade made familiar to readers of Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists, and the nave of the old cathedral of the metropolitan diocese was, at the same period, used as an exchange. One more instance may be cited. Mr. G. L. Gomme, writing in the *Contemporary Review*, in May, 1896, mentions "the practice of the old order of serjeants-at-law who assembled in the nave of old St. Paul's Cathedral, each serjeant having been allotted a special pillar at his appointment, where he met his clients in legal consultation, hearing the facts of the case, taking notes of the evidence, or pacing up and down."

It is with the holding of courts in churches that this paper is more particularly concerned. The evidence on this point, though it has to be sought for in many out-of-the-way places, is sufficiently abundant for the purpose. Ritson, writing of the early times of courts leet says that "the stewards or bailiffs of a leet would in bad weather occasionally hold courts in the church, where, notwithstanding a canon, it is in many places still held." Though the practice of holding courts in churches had been prohibited by both the English and Scottish churches, it was not so easily abolished, and we learn from the York Rolls, published by the Surtees Society, that in 1472 the parishioners of two Yorkshire parishes were reported to the Archbishop of York for holding their local council meetings in the parish church. Two centuries had then passed since the canonical prohibition of the practice; but old customs have a remarkable vitality, especially in Yorkshire, and in the northern counties generally. At Ashburton the annual court leet and court baron were held alternately by the stewards of the lord of the manor in the chapel of St. Lawrence; and at Hathersage, in Derbyshire, announcement of the holding of the court baron of the manor was made in the parish

church in 1656, notwithstanding the strong insistence of Archbishop Laud on the sacred character of ecclesiastical edifices.

The ancient laws of Wales, preserved at the Record Office, show that, in the ninth and tenth centuries, the churches of the principality were regularly used for the sittings of the courts of justice. "Let the judge," it is said, in reference to the accused in a case of theft, "require of him his oath, with that of two men, nearest to him in worth; and that in a week from the succeeding Sunday at the church where the sacramental bread and the holy water shall be." Both civil and criminal cases were there dealt with, for mention is made of judgment being given in the church in a case of debtor and surety; but litigious causes were not heard on Sundays, from which exception it may be inferred that other causes were sometimes, though not perhaps invariably, heard on that day.

When the use of churches for the holding of courts ceased in the principality cannot be precisely determined; but it is known that the practice continued in England down to the early years of the sixteenth century. The Chapter Acts of the Collegiate Church of St. Peter and

St. Wilfrid at Ripon, covering the period from 1452 to 1506, as published by the Surtees Society, showed that the chapter exercised jurisdiction at that time in a great variety of matters which have now for many years been dealt with solely by the ordinary civil tribunals. The entries show that the majority of the cases adjudicated upon by the chapter related to wills ; but they also had cognisance of questions of tenure, bastardy, defamation, marriage, and cases of perjury arising out of these. The proceedings appear to have been conducted similarly to the practice of the ecclesiastical courts of a later date. There is nothing in the records of the chapter to show in what part of the church the court was held ; but at Durham, where a similar practice existed, it sat in what was known as the "galilee" of the cathedral.

This use of ecclesiastical edifices has been traced to a similar practice among the Romans. The word "church," and also the Scottish equivalent "kirk," is derived from the Greek word *kyriokos*, "the house of the Lord," which same meaning was attached to the word *basilica* from *basileus*, the king. The basilica was used both as a temple and a hall of justice, or court-

house. In England churches were called basilicas in the Latin records relating to them from the seventh to the fifteenth century, the inventories of Jarrow and Monk Wearmouth, published by the Surtees Society, showing that an inscription recording the dedication of St. Paul's Church, in the former town, contains the words, *dedicatio basilica Sancti Pauli*; and the York Rolls, published by the same society, record that a commission was issued in 1458 to John, Bishop of Philippiolis, *ad consecrandum basilicam, infra villam de Colthorp*.

It may be noted in this connection that the rector of a parish was known in early times as the town reeve, the fiscal officer of the parish. He was the owner, for the time being, of the chancel, in which he was entitled to the chief seat. The chancel was the tribunal, according to Phillimore—no mean authority on such a matter—and was the seat of judgment. The earliest occurrence of the word "choir" dates from 1297. Further evidence in support of the view that the early English churches were regarded as basilicas, in the original meaning of the word, is to be found in the existence, beneath the floors of many of them, of a crypt bearing a striking and very

suggestive resemblance to the subterranean chamber discovered below the basilica at Pompeii, and described as follows by Dr. Lange:—"At the west end of the great hall are three rooms. The central one of these is the tribunal, which is raised five and a half feet above the floor of the great hall, and is thirty-two feet broad, and eighteen feet two inches in depth. On the sides of the tribunal are two side rooms about eighteen feet broad, separated from the tribunal by two small staircases, and having their floors on a level with the side aisles. Their back walls are in a straight line with the back wall of the tribunal. The anterior enclosing walls of the staircases end towards the side rooms in three-quarter pillars. From the side rooms small doors open into the staircases, which lead to a subterranean chamber eleven feet below the tribunal. This chamber, lighted on its back wall by two small windows, is connected with the floor above by two holes, the purpose of which is uncertain. As the doors of the subterranean chamber could not be locked, the hitherto prevailing opinion that it was a prison or a treasure-room is untenable. Probably it served for depositing objects required in legal proceedings."

The crypts in English churches may now be considered in their bearing on the question before us. One of the most suitable for this comparison is the one discovered at Repton, in Derbyshire, in 1779. This differs from the subterranean chamber beneath the basilica at Pompeii only in the fact that the aisles, corresponding to the side rooms of the latter structure, are not in a straight line with the east wall of the chancel. In the western angles of the crypt are two passages communicating by flights of steps with the chancel. The area of the crypt is nearly seventeen square feet. The vaulted roof is supported by four spirally wreathed pillars, with plain square capitals, on which there are traces of coloured decoration. In the east wall, under the chancel window, is an aperture to admit light into the crypt.

The crypt below the east end of the chancel of Hornsea Church, in East Yorkshire, differs from the example at Repton in having only one flight of steps, which occupies the north-west corner; but there may have been another at the south-west corner, as is rendered probable by the fact that the tomb of the last rector, who died in 1430, occupies the corresponding corner above; so that the entrance to such a staircase may have been

built up. The crypt is nearly square, the dimensions being fifteen feet five inches from north to south, and fourteen feet two inches from east to west. In the east wall is a window, protected by iron bars, and measuring nearly four feet on the inside, but diminishing in the outer wall to one foot eight inches. The walls of the crypt, as measured at this window, are three feet thick. They are built of cobble stones, and appear to have been plastered on the inside. In the south wall there appears to have formerly been a niche or receptacle of some kind ; but it has been built up, and only the stone crossing the top of the former opening now remains. The stairs in the north-west corner have long been in a very dilapidated condition, and only the lowest step is now in its place, so that the original means of access to the crypt is now impracticable. The width seems to have been about two and a half feet. The present mode of entrance is by a ladder placed beneath a trap-door near the steps of the altar, and over the place of the formerly existing steps in the north-west corner. The present church does not appear to be older than the fourteenth century, but it is known from the Domesday record that there was a church at

Hornsea at the time of that survey, so that the crypt may date from the Norman Conquest, or even earlier.

There are similar crypts in the old churches at Ripon, Hexham, and at Brixworth, in Northamptonshire. The example last mentioned appears to have had two staircases, one on each side, and, as in the other instances, is entered from the chancel. In these and other old English churches, the altar did not stand at the east end of the chancel, but at the end of the nave, "on the chord of the apse," says Freeman, so that it would be directly under the arch of the chancel.

There remains to be considered a very curious feature in the architecture of many old churches, which has long been a puzzle to the antiquary and the church architect, namely, the oblique apertures in the walls known by the not very elegant term of "squints." The majority of these curious openings are in the wall adjoining the south side of the arch of the chancel, and are so placed that a person standing at the south door of the church can, by looking through the hole, see the Communion table. The purpose ascribed to them in Parker's "Glossary of Architecture" is "to enable a person standing in the porch to see the high

altar." But in opposition to this view there stands the fact, already stated, that in the earliest ages of the church the altar stood directly under the arch of the chancel. Why, it may be asked, should such pains be taken to enable the elevation of the sacramental paten and chalice to be seen by a person who would not enter the church? It is a much more reasonable conjecture that the purpose of these apertures was to enable a person standing in the porch to see the judge or chairman when a civil court or a local folk-mote was held in the chancel. A "door-ward" is mentioned by William of Shoreham, whose poems, edited by Thomas Wright, have been published by the Percy Society; and was probably an officer who on such occasions stood in the porch, so as to be able to receive instructions from within, passed on to him from the presiding official through the medium of another person sitting near the inner opening of the aperture, the object of which, if such an explanation be rejected, must be regarded as an unsolvable mystery.

THOMAS FROST.

Benefit of Clergy.

“If a clerk had been taken
For stealing of bacon,
For burglary, murder, or rape,
If he could but rehearse
(Well prompt) his *neck verse*,
He never could fail to escape.”

—*British Apollo*, 1710.

IN the first book of Chronicles, chapter sixteen, will be found the admonition, “Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm.” By a species of reasoning not now acceptable, but emphasized in olden times for the most selfish of motives, this was construed into a special protection of the priesthood. The clergy claimed to be above the operation and execution of civil law, and though they might be tried for any crime and justly convicted, they had only to claim the “benefit” of their class and prove their right to it by reading the “neck verse” from the fifty-first Psalm, in order to escape punishment. It is true that their goods might still be forfeited, but this was the utmost penalty they could endure, and was not likely to affect much the ecclesiastic who otherwise might have been imprisoned, scourged,

or hanged. The test of the "neck verse" was, of course, a very suitable one in days when only the "clerk" was a scholar. Whether the existence of the law which so much favoured the man who could read served as a stimulus to education, we cannot say; we only know that on certain occasions illiterate and untaught persons made desperate efforts to master the rudiments, in order to save their necks by reciting the "Miserere Mei Deus." The reading took place before a secular and a spiritual judge, and no doubt was a severe ordeal. The criminal was well aware that failure to read the "neck verse" to the satisfaction of the attesting hearers would result in the dread record of "Suspendatur" against his name; and doubtless, as the culprit was led away to be hanged, he would bitterly regret that the era of compulsory education had not dawned. Obviously any such test would be quite impossible now, even if the age had not outgrown so ridiculous a statute, and was not opposed to the spirit of it as well as the letter.

Each prison had its particular "neck verse," and although a criminal might roll off glibly that of Edinburgh or Carlisle, it by no means followed that he would be equally successful elsewhere.

Most of these have now become extinct, and so far search for them has only ended in failure. The authentic "neck verse" used at Newgate is, however, extant. The portion of Scripture was the first verse of Psalm li. ; technically known as David's prayer for remission of sin.

"Miserere mei Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam. Et secundum multitudinem miserationum tuarum dele iniquitatem meam."

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness ; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions."

The method of proceeding was this—the prisoner, on conviction, demanded his clergy. Thereupon a book, usually a psalter, was placed in his hand, and he was told to read a verse. The judge then demanded of the bishop's commissary—"Legit ut clericus?" The fate of the prisoner depended upon the exact form of the answer. If the reply was "Legit," he was burned in the hand, and then set free ; if "Non legit," he suffered the prescribed penalty.

The following account of a scene in the Guild Hall, where Marco Polo is being instructed by one Andrew Hone in the different national customs, forms a dramatic and appropriate

illustration of the "Benefit of Clergy" and the Church's jurisdiction therein.

"A malefactor had been apprehended in Cheap, in the very act of cutting a purse from the girdle of Sir John de Stapleford, Vicar-General of the Bishop of Winchester. Cases of *flagrante delicto*, according to an ancient canon law, required no other trial than the publicity or incontrovertibility of the fact; no further proof of the offence was needed, and no defence allowed; open guilt was instantly followed by vengeance. According to these principles, Sir William de Ormesby, the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, therefore intimated to the officers that, as they might and indeed ought to have struck off the head of the prisoner before the Conduit, it was unnecessary thus to have given the Court the trouble of passing judgment. 'Let him be hanged upon the elms of Tyburn,' was forthwith pronounced as his doom. Pale, trembling, suing for mercy, the wretch was taken from the bar, not indeed without exciting some suppressed feelings of compassion in court. Evidently the punishment was disproportionate to the crime. Louder and louder became the cries of the miserable culprit, and just when the serjeants were dragging him across the

threshold, he clung to the pillar which divided the portal, shrieking in a voice of agony, which pierced through the hall, 'I demand of holy Church the Benefit of my Clergy!'

"Perhaps in strictness the time for claiming this privilege had gone by, but the officers halted with their prey, and one of the prothonotaries having hurried to them with a message from Chief Justice de Ormesby, the thief was replaced at the bar. Stepping forward, the Vicar-General addressed the court, and entreated permission, in the absence of the proper ordinary, to try the validity of the claim. Producing his breviary, he held the page close to the eyes of the kneeling prisoner; he inclined his ear. The bloodless lips of the ghastly caitiff were seen to quiver.

"*Legit ut clericus*, instantly exclaimed the Vicar-General, and this exclamation at once delivered the felon from death, though not from captivity. 'Take him home to the pit,' said the Vicar-General, 'where, shut out from the light of day and the air of heaven, he will be bound in iron, fed with the bread of tribulation, and drink the water of sorrow, until he shall have sought atonement for his misdeeds and expiated his shame!'"

It is remarkable that any such law should ever have been introduced, and, that having been introduced, it should so long have been maintained. From the time of King Stephen to the time of King George IV., the "privilegium clericale" could be claimed, although before it was finally abolished, it had undergone many changes and modifications. To a priesthood which was not particularly moral or law-abiding, this article in Canon Law was a veritable boon, and we can well understand how tenaciously it would be insisted upon. The evidence of a layman could not by Canon Law be received against a "clerk" in a criminal case; nor could a "judgment of blood" be pronounced against a son of the Church unless first degraded.

But these privileges, first of all intended only for men in holy orders, were speedily applied to others. It is believed that nuns claimed "benefit of clergy," and certain it is that women and children, being under the special protection of the Church, were allowed it. Then the lay clerks obtained a concession, and of course the door-keepers, the sub-deacons, and the humbler members of the Church could not well be refused. Finally it seems that any reader could plead "his

clergy," and the abuse of a precious and restricted privilege became general. Except for high treason and sacrilege a tutored man could escape the proper penalty for any crime. Holy orders became a recognised protection for all enormities, and by the time of the second Henry, murder was so rife and the murderers so defiant, that the monarch determined upon prohibitive measures. But he found his greatest hindrance in Thomas à Becket, who, when raised to the Archbishopric, became his strongest antagonist. The Pope, too, was not disposed to assist a temporal sovereign at the expense of the Church, though he ultimately assented to a few of the articles which the Clarendon Convention had agreed upon to restrain the audacious clerics. A few years later a further advance was registered when laymen took the place of ecclesiastics as Common Law judges, and issued writs of prohibition when the ecclesiastical tribunals attempted to overstep the boundaries established by custom. Even the Archbishop was brought to admit the right and justice of this in the time of Edward I. Henry II. had struck at the very root of the "privilegium clericale" when he ordained that a criminous clerk should be deprived of his orders, and then

as a layman should be punished by the temporal powers. He thus yielded to the Church on the inviolability of "the Lord's anointed," but claimed his due when they had formally ceased to belong to the Church. By the Constitutions of Clarendon it was also provided that criminous clerks should be prosecuted in the civil courts, and that appeals in spiritual cases should be carried to the King, not to the Pope, except with the former's consent. This entirely undermined the papal authority, and rendered the courts of the temporal monarch supreme in legal matters.

Becket's fiery opposition to the Clarendon resolutions is explained by Mr. A. de Grasse Stevens (to whom, and to Mr. Grantham R. Dodd, the writer of this article hereby conveys full acknowledgments) as a fight for a higher principle than that of merely saving the life of an offender. "The theory of the mediæval Church," he says, "in criminal jurisprudence, was that of freely and unhesitatingly adopting the greater doctrine of punishment, when inflicted by man upon his fellow-men, proceeding not from terror only but also from love. Thus, imprisonment granted through the 'law of clergy,' in place of death, with its accompaniments of privation and

suffering, was entered upon by the criminal, and demanded by the Ordinary, as an ecclesiastical penance, whereby justice should be upheld, and the penitent learn contrition in its fullest sense, while from this repentance might come amendment of life."

From the time of the Clarendon Convention the revision and modification of "benefit of clergy" went steadily on. In 1274 bigamists were disallowed benefit of clergy; in 1487 it was enacted that no layman could plead the benefit a second time; Jews, Turks, blind men, and pirates (a motley collection) were deprived of the benefit entirely; burglars were excluded in the time of Edward VI.; and in the reign of Elizabeth very extensive and far-reaching amendments were effected. Up to that time a clerk might clear himself of any crime by compurgation—that is, by swearing and procuring other witnesses to swear that he was innocent. Bishop Jocelin cleared himself of complicity in the murder of à Becket by this simple means. No doubt the law led to the subornation of perjury, and in Elizabeth's time it was abolished. She likewise ordained that "cut-purses, pick-purses, and very felons and thieves" should be wholly excluded

from the privilege, as were persons who feloniously took away another person's money and household effects. In 1531 murderers, "if not in holy orders," were deprived of benefit, and horse-stealers lost the privilege in 1547. In 1532 benefit of clergy was abolished for all under the rank of deacons. It is well for the world of letters that the provision as to murderers was not made before, or Ben Jonson would have been hanged for killing his man; but at the Old Bailey he read his "neck verse," and escaped with a branding of his thumb at Newgate. The brand (a T for Tyburn) served both as "a mark of distinction" and a punishment. Benefit of clergy allowed many infamous men to escape the hangman who well deserved his attentions; it only spared one at whose lucky escape we can rejoice, and that was Rare Ben. At a much later date another man, who might have made a name in the world of letters, failed to obtain his benefit. In the reign of George II. forgery was made a capital offence without benefit of clergy, and Dr. Dodd, for whom Samuel Johnson so eloquently pleaded, expiated that crime on the gallows in 1777.

Meanwhile numerous conspicuous murderers

had been able to avail themselves of the law. The Earl of Pembroke, in 1678, who brutally killed Mr. Nathaniel Carey in a drunken brawl, claimed the privilege of the statute, and "the Lord High Steward could not deny it him." The Earl of Warwick was "discharged on pleading the statute" in 1699, when found guilty of the manslaughter of Richard Coote. A very curious case was that of the notorious Duchess of Kingston, originally Miss Chudleigh, who bigamously married the Duke whilst she was the wife of the Earl of Bristol. She slipped through the meshes of the law by claiming her privilege. Women, however, had for the greater part of time not received the same leniency or consideration as men. For nearly five hundred years the men enjoyed the privilege of the "neck verse," but it was only in the reign of William and Mary that an Act was passed permitting women to come under the same provisions. It was not destined that they should long or fully retain the advantages of the olden rule. Already it was a dead-letter in many respects where originally it had been extremely useful; and in 1827 it disappeared entirely. Fourteen years later the privilege was taken away from the peers, and thus the last relic of the Canon Law

passed away, when "read or be hanged" were the alternatives given to the criminal, and the only impetus offered to the layman to become a scholar.

"Benefit of clergy" never had existence or legal meaning in Scotland; yet, strange to say, it found its way into the American colonies, and was in force there in 1779. A document of that date has been discovered having direct reference to it, and certain rebels were expressly informed that in case of their conviction they would suffer death "as in cases of felony, without benefit of clergy" (Chapter 25, Laws of the state of New York, October 22, 1779). Mr. de Grasse Stevens has discovered a curious piece of colonial history of about the same period. Lord Dunmore had made himself heartily disliked, and the situation between England and America was growing more and more strained. Open conflict had already occurred, and the situation was causing the greatest anxiety alike to the military and the civil authorities. At that time the Tories owned a powerful organ in a newspaper published by Rivington, the headpiece of which ran as follows, with the Royal arms as a central ornament.

THURSDAY, NOV. 23, 1775.

[No. 136.]

Rivington's NEW YORK GAZETTEER:

OR



THE

Connecticut, Hudson River,

New Jersey, and Quebec

WEEKLY ADVERTISER.

Printed at his open and uninfluenced Press, Hanover Square.

This newspaper the Whig faction determined to suppress. Accordingly, says Mr. Stevens, one hundred of them, headed by Isaac Seers of New Haven marched down Broadway to the foot of Wall Street where stood Rivington's office; this they completely sacked, carrying away the type to cast into bullets; and when Mr. Rivington objected to this course of action, they offered him an order on Lord Dunmore for a new supply, saying since he had seized and confiscated a printing office in Norfolk which belonged to the Whigs, he might re-establish the *Gazetteer* out of his spoils. By the terms of the Act just before passed the offenders were denied the benefit of clergy, but whether they suffered or not has not transpired.

"Benefit of clergy" has been pointed to as one of the salient examples of the arrogance of the clergy and the servility and ignorance of the

people during the early days of the English Church. It must be remembered, however, that some slight excuse can be found for the ecclesiastics who devised the law by means of which the priests were removed from the power of those temporal courts which were ill-suited to try them, or to understand some of the offences with which they might have been charged. The bishops had their own tribunals and their own punishments and prisons for defaulters, and the original aim of the "benefit of clergy" seems to have been to leave the sole power in the hands of the priest's superior, and to preserve him from the secular arm. In guarding against one possible abuse, however, the clerical party undoubtedly fell into another, and worse. It was an abuse that grew, and one that caused continual trouble for centuries. The statute of Westminster of 1275, made it incumbent that the accused person should be formally indicted before he could be claimed, and this was followed up by the rule, in Henry VI.'s time, that the conviction of the prisoner should be registered, and that only in order to arrest judgment, should he claim his clergy. So long as the law was restricted to the tonsured class, the evil, though great, was within

limits; but by the "Pro Clero" statute of 1350, admitting "all manner of clerks" to the privilege, the evil passed beyond all reasonable limits. Only by slow stages could the wrong permitted be undone again. One offence after another was expressly excluded from benefit of clergy, until the way was prepared for extinguishing the clergyable offence entirely. By the 7 and 8 George IV., cap. 28, and 4 and 6 Victoria, cap. 22 (to use the legal phraseology), the law was rid of one of its greatest hindrances, and judicial deadlocks were rendered almost impossible.

CUMING WALTERS.

The Miracle Play at Newcastle.

WHEN the drama in Rome, reflecting the morals and manners of the time, became an abomination, it was put under the ban of the Church and suppressed. But equally in the interests of social and spiritual progress, it was revived. It was used to popularise religion, and to extend scriptural knowledge. By means of the sacred drama the illiterate were taught and impressed as they could not have been by any other method. And both in mediæval Europe and in England the miracle play gave birth to the profane drama. The religious or mystery play was brought over to England by the alien clergy who came in the train of the Conqueror.

Ornate, ritual, dumb shows, and processions, as Mr. Sidney Clarke tells us, in his interesting monograph on "Miracle Plays in England," were employed by the clergy to attract and impress congregations with the knowledge of scriptural truths. Mr. Stopford Brooke defines the miracle

play as a representation of some portion of scripture history, or of the life of some saint of the Church; and the mystery as a representation of any portion of the New Testament history concerned with a mysterious subject, such as the Incarnation, the Atonement, or the Resurrection, but, he adds, they were mingled together in England into one. Spectacular effect, action and dialogue, the primary elements of modern dramatic art, it appears, were employed, and the first miracle play in England was written by Geoffrey, afterwards Abbot of St. Albans, in 1110. In the thirteenth century, when English was generally substituted for the brief Latin dialogues which hitherto had sufficed, the liturgical drama suddenly sprang into popularity, and, realising the great possibilities of scriptural spectacular, story-tellers and wandering minstrels soon became formidable rivals of the clerics. Compelled to lengthen and brighten their more reverent and dignified representations, the clerical actors drew vast numbers of the people from near and far to witness and listen to their plays. Churches and churchyards proving inadequate and unsuitable for the accommodation of the audiences, the clergy ultimately performed their mystical plays

in the market-places and open spaces. Early in the thirteenth century they were forbidden to act in churches or "at mumblings," but at its close they were again allowed to represent the Resurrection and Nativity in their churches. Pope Clement, in 1328, decreed a thousand days of pardon to all who attended and were of good behaviour at the plays, which were thus stimulated into vigorous life once more. But the fortunes of the plays and players were fickle. Bishop Bonner, in 1542, forbade the plays in churches and chapels; in 1589 an injunction, ratified at Rome, prohibited the clergy from taking part in miracle plays, and in 1603, James I. forbade such performances in the churches. Up to the last mentioned date the plays were still performed at Kendal.

For a period of 163 years the mysteries or miracle plays were performed at Newcastle, the earliest record being 1426, and the latest 1589 (Craik's "Literature in England" says 1598), the year in which an injunction was ratified at Rome to prohibit the clergy from acting in the plays. Mr. Clarke states that sixteen plays were performed in Newcastle, compared with fifty-seven at York. The Coventry plays were suppressed

in 1580, and an attempt to revive them four years later, with "The Destruction of Jerusalem," as an additional attraction, failed, so that it is clear the plays were waning in public favour for several years prior to their abandonment in Newcastle. Yet in Chester, the stronghold of the miracle play, where the mysteries were performed as far back as 1268, and were continued up to 1577, they were again represented by the trades guilds in the year 1600,—the only three manuscript copies of the Chester plays were written in 1600, 1604, and 1607, presumably whilst they were still being performed,—when English drama had reached a high standard, four theatrical companies playing no fewer than a hundred different plays in sixteen years, so plentiful was the production. A complete set of the York plays has been preserved, and curiously enough, they are written in the Northumbrian dialect, which shows either that the dialect had undergone comparatively little change in Yorkshire since the ninth century, or that their author was of Northumbrian extraction. Of course the fact that the Northumbrian dialect still retains much of the pure accent of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers, must not be overlooked. That the mystery play was enacted

within the precincts of St. Nicholas' Church, now the Cathedral of the Northern diocese, is practically placed beyond doubt, for according to one of Novocastria's historians the roof of this church contained a shaft similar to that in St. Paul's for "the setting forth of a white pigeon that was let to fly out of a hole that is yet to be sene in the mydst of the rooffe of the great ile to represent the descent of the Holy Ghost at Whitsuntide."

Easter tide, Christmas Eve, and Corpus Christi day (June 14th) were the principal occasions on which the miracle plays were performed, but the representations extended over a period of from three to twenty-eight days. At York on Midsummer Day the play of St. George was performed, then there was the Corpus Christi Guild, the Lammas Day play, and the Creed play. At Kingston-upon-Hull for over three hundred years the play of Noah was performed on Plough Monday, the first Monday after Twelfth Day, a day on which northern ploughmen now show their prowess with the plough instead of drawing the "Stot plough" and begging for money for beer. At the end of the fifteenth century it was customary to draw the plough about a fire "for gode begynnyng of the yere." Ploughmen



THE MIRACLE PLAY OF NOAH'S FLOOD AT KINGSTON UPON-HULL.

formerly paraded on Plough Monday, and probably plays of some kind were arranged for their special benefit. "Brand's Observations on Popular Antiquities" gives us a translation of an old poetic narrative of the Corpus Christi procession and plays, when—

"The hallowed bread, with worship great, in silver pix
they beare
About the church, or in the citie passing here and theare."

And after describing the bearing aloft of a canopy of "silke and cloth of golde." the narrator resumes :—

"Christe's passion here derided is, with sundrie maskes
and playes,
Faire Ursley, with hir mayden all, doth pass amid the
ways :
And valiant George, with Speare thou killest the dreadfull
dragon here,
The Devil's house is drawne about, wherein there doth
appere
A wondrous sort of damned sprites, with foule and
fearfull looke,
Great Christopher doth wade and passe with Christ amid
the brooke ;
Sebastian full of feathered shaftes, the dint of dart doth
feele,
There walketh Kathren, with hir sworde in hande, and
cruel wheele ;

The Challis and the singing Oake with Barbara is led,
 And sundrie other pageants playde, in worship of this bred,
 That please the foolish people well."

* * * *

"A number greate of armed men here all this while do stande,
 To looke that no disorder be, nor any pilching hande ;
 For all the church-goodes out are brought, which certainly
 would be,
 A bootie good, if every man might have his libertie."

* * * *

"In villages the Husbandmen about their corne doe ride,
 With many Crosses, Banners, and Sir John their priest
 beside."

The Gospel was read aloud at various parts of the field in order to keep "the corne from winde, and raine, and from the blast." At Newcastle the plays would be performed on these occasions, and the open-air performances would be given in open spaces, such as the Castle Fields, Sandgate, the Close, Bridge End, the Market Place, St. Nicholas' Square, and on the Forth Banks. Noah is the only play of the eighteen performed at Newcastle, the text of which has been preserved, and it is interesting to note that this play was performed at Wakefield under the title of "The Flood," at Chester, Kingston-upon-Hull, and at York, where the pessoners (fishmongers) and mariners (bargemen) were responsible for its

production. At York, Noah cast the lead in approved nautical fashion. But at Newcastle the play of Noah was performed by the shipwrights, and the dialogue is full of technicalities which must have made the play of great interest to a community extensively engaged in ship-building.

Bourne, to whom historians are indebted for many particulars pertaining to bygone Newcastle, has preserved the ancient play belonging to the company of shipwrights, by inserting it in his history, and Brand, the Newcastle Vicar, whose work on antiquities is invaluable, tells us that he sought in vain in all the archives of the several societies of Newcastle for another play, and he therefore concludes that after the Reformation they were probably destroyed industriously as reliques of Popish superstition. From "Noah's Ark" or the shipwrights' ancient play or dirge, a few quotations to give a general idea of the play will suffice. It begins with the Creator's soliloquy :—

" Ere was this world that I have wrought
 No marvel it is if I do show ;
 Then folk on earth I made of nought
 Now are they fully my foe.

Vengeance now will I do
 Of them that have grieved me ill,
 Great floods shall over them go,
 And run over hoope and hill,
 All mankind dead shall be
 With storms both stiff and steer
 All but Noah, his children and their wives."

An angel is sent from heaven with these instructions :--

"Sleeping thou shalt him find
 Bid him go make a ship
 Of stiffboard and gnit,
 Although he be not a wright
 Therefore bid him not lett,
 He shall have wit at will
 Be that he come there to ;
 All things I him fulfill."

Having found Noah they hold a short dialogue, and the angel gives him guidance on two or three important points, though the purport of the language would not be altogether clear to modern Tyneside shipwrights. The angel says :—

"Look that she draw when she is dreft,
 And in her side a door then shear,
 With fenefters full fitly feft."

"Fenefters" probably means to have openings like a window, and "fitly feft" to have them closely joined so as to be watertight. Alliterations artful aid was probably freely employed in

order to make the angel appear more cunning in coining phrases than the spectators, and so heighten the realism. Here is a portion of the "mystery," the meaning of which those who gathered round to learn a lesson would not easily unravel.

"For every ilk a wight for warks wild,
And many fowled in fins fair
And in felony fouly filled."

Here is a couplet calculated to spur the aged boat-builder into action, and to make all possible speed with his task.

"Beast and body with bone and blood,
They shall be stormed through stress of storm."

Fearing that the language is too terrible, even for an angel, that worthy character tries to allay Noah's alarm, with more consoling thoughts such as these: "Noah and his brood shall be saved by sea and land." "You take with you both ox and cow, of ilk a thing that life has lent, the male and the female."

"You fetch in fother for your freight,
And make good purveiance for you prove,
That they perish not in your sight."

Realising the heaviness of his task, and the responsibilities it involves, Noah explains that he

is six hundred winters old and "needless" to do such a deed. He plaintively adds :—

" Work looms for to work and weild
For I was never since I was born
Of kind of craft to burthen a boat ;
For I have neither riff nor ruff,
Spier, sprund, sprout nor sprot.
Christ be the shaper of this ship,
For a ship need make I must."

What simple faith ! what quiet resignation !
How clearly Noah realises that a man must do his Maker's will, even without tools, and that if a man only have faith and begin his task, it is half done. One wonders what lessons the shipwrights gathered from these words, and how they sympathised with Noah's plight. Deabolus entreats Noah's wife to stay, there is no haste, and scoffs at Noah's skaith.

" I swear thee by my crooked snout,
All that thy husband goes about
Is little to thy profit."

Procrastination and ridicule ; doubtful and profitless duty ! Are men not swerved from the paths of rectitude by these tempting thoughts to-day ? They succeed with Noah's wife, in the play, and she consents to give her partner a draught from "the mightful main," in order that

he shall no longer learn how to accomplish his work. The potion has a curious effect upon Noah, for mixed with his spitting and spluttering come the words :—

“ What the devil, what drink is it
By my father's soul I have lost my wit.”

Noah finds that he must take his wife into his confidence, and he divulges his plan to escape the Deluge, on which his wife hotly rejoins :

“ By faith I no rake
Whether thou be friend or foe,
The devil of hell thee speed,
To ship when thou shalt go.”

Noah does not fret and fume, and besides his wife is not so violent and whimsical a woman as she is made out to be in the play performed at other places. He has set his hands to his task, and he will not forsake it till it is completed. He kneels and prays for help from on high :—

“ God send me help in high,
To chink yon nail too,
God send me help in high,
Your hand to hold again,
That all my will be done,
My strokes be not in vain.”

And the angel descends to speak words of solace

into his ear. At last the work is done and Noah rejoices.

“ Now is the ship well made
Within and without thinks me,
Now home then will I wend
To fetch in my money,
Have good day both old and young,
My blessing with you be.”

This idea of enjoyment is not quite the same as that which Mr. Tinworth has carried out in his latest panel depicting the building of the Ark. He has introduced groups of men engaged in “gambling, drinking and cock-fighting” to show that in spite of Noah’s remonstrance, they would come to enjoy themselves under the very shadow of his big ship; to show how little they cared for him or his prophecies. But to return to the Newcastle play, Deabolus once more appears, expresses disgust with what he sees in violent phrases and with vehement voice, and the play abruptly ends. By its very incompleteness the spectators would find themselves thrown back upon their imagination to supply a conclusion, and thus the lesson would be indelibly impressed upon their minds.

Earliest mention of Corpus Christi plays in Newcastle occurs in the ordinary of the Coopers’

Company under January 20th, 1426, though Bourne believes the mysteries were performed as far back as the year 1328. The title of the plays mentioned in the Coopers' ordinary are: "The Baptyfying of Chrift," "Purification," "The Defcent into Hell," "Hogmagog or Hoggmay-gowk," "The Burial of Chrift," "Noah's Ark," and "Beringe of the Croffe." Reference to the miracle plays is also made in the records of the Smiths' and Glovers' Company in 1436, the Skinners' in 1437, the Barbers' in 1442, Slaters' in 1451, Sadlers' in 1459, and in the Fullers' and Dyers' Company's ordinances in 1477. By an ordinary of the Goldsmiths', Plumbers', Glaziers', Pewterers', and Painters', dated 1536, they were commanded to play at their feast "The Three Kynges of Collyn." In 1552 the Merchant Adventurers of Newcastle were concerned "in the exhibition of five plays;" one of them is assigned to the ostmen and charged to the account of the Corporation, but this is not the only occasion on which the city fathers had to bear a portion of the expense connected with the production of the mysteries. Bourne believes that the Drapers, Mercers and Boothmen each had a separate play, and the Spicers, who appeared anciently to have

been a branch of the said fellowship of Merchant Adventurers, probably provided one. The Merchants of Newcastle during the reign of Edward IV., obtained an act for settling the order of their procession on Corpus Christi day.

When the players of Durham visited Newcastle in 1567, the mayor of the latter town entertained his fellow townsmen with a performance. The cost was £3 3s. 4d., viz., £3 and a quart of wine to the players, 4d. ; four links for light, 2s. ; and three loads of coals to keep the actors warm, 1s. Mention of Durham recalls the fact that on Corpus Christi day, the trade companies marched in procession to the Abbey Church with their banners and torches, and the prior and convent came forth to meet them in their vest-copes with " St. Cuthbert's Banner and two goodly fair crosses. All entered the Abbey Church together, and Te Deum was solemnly sung and plaide on the orgaynes." And we find from Henderson's "Folk-Lore of the Northern Counties," that the procession, in a mutilated form, survived the Reformation, and lingered on till about eighty years ago. Indeed, up to the beginning of the present century the companies, with bands and banners of the respective trades,

and boys carrying pieces of burning rope instead of torches, proceeded to Durham Cathedral to attend divine service, and the dean presented each warden with a pair of gloves. In the year that the Durham players visited their Novocastrian friends to witness their plays, the Newcastle Corporation had a good round sum to pay for the miracles; the following items appearing in the account :—

“ Robert Watson, for the good of the play				
First for 60 men’s dinners	-	-	-	2 10 0
For 35 horses for the players at 4d. a				
horse	-	-	-	0 11 8
For wine at their dinners	-	-	-	0 6 8
More for a drum	-	-	-	0 0 8
The waits for playing before the players	-			0 2 0
For painting the sergeant’s staffs	-	-		0 2 0
For the sergeant’s staffs	-	-	-	0 2 0
More to John Hardcastle, for making 46				
little castles and six great castles, to				
the good of the play	-	-	-	0 8 0
More for painting Beelzebub’s cloak	-			0 0 4
				£4 3 4”

Curious as these items are they do not exhaust the list. From “the old book” of the Newcastle Slaters’ Company we extract the following items :—

The offering of Isaac by Abraham,

A.D. 1568.

" The places for thear dennares	-	-	-	3	0
Item for dreanke	-	-	-	0	6
„ „ bearers of the care and baneres	-			0	18
„ „ drencke (to theme that bare the care) and 1d. to the places in drencke and 2d. the horse mete				0	6
„ „ the pyper	-	-	-	0	8
„ „ rosemare	-	-	-	0	2
„ „ setten of the swearde	-	-	-	0	0
					6 0"

Interesting memoranda occur in the old books of the Fullers' and Dyers' Company under the reference.

1561.

" The charggs of the play this yere					
First for the rehearsal of the play before the craft	-	-	-	-	10 0
Item to a minstrel that night	-	-	-		0 3
„ for salmone trout	-	-	-		0 15
„ „ wyn	-	-	-		3 6
„ „ the Maunday loves and caks	-				2 8
„ „ 3 yerds and a ^d lyn cloth for God's coot	-	-	-		3 2
„ „ the carynge of the trowt and wyn about the towne	-	-	-		0 12
„ „ drynk and thayr fuppers that wated of the paient	-	-	-		5 0
Summa totalis					50/-"

The first book of their "old book" contains these items :—

"Three cappes and thre fepters and thre crownes ;
Box with our ordenarie and oure playe book."

From the Merchant Adventurers' old books we learn that in 1552 there were "fyve playes," for which £31 1s. 11d. was paid. The Ventyners subscribed 39s. 10d. towards their play on one occasion. The books of most of the companies mention the plays which were "acted in the open air and in some place calculated to show the performance to the great crowd of spectators. They were neither so refined nor so delicate as modern exhibitions," we are told, "yet they were useful in impressing on the rude minds of an unlettered people the chief facts in sacred history, and in softening their gross stubborn manners." Brand says they were acted in what was called in some places the playground, or in some spot calculated to show the performance to the greatest crowd of spectators. Many of them were very indelicate and obscene. Warton, in his "History of Poetry," vol. 1, page 242, says they were useful "not only in teaching the great truths of Scripture to men who could not read the Bible, but in abolishing the barbarous attachment to

military games, and the bloody contentions of the tournament, which had so long prevailed as the sole species of popular amusement ; rude and even ridiculous as they were, they softened the manners of the people by diverting the publick attention to spectacles in which the mind was concerned."

On Corpus Christi day every company in Newcastle walked in procession in livery and performed their own play in suitable open spaces, and when a play was concluded the players and their stage proceeded to the next playground, and so on till all the chosen sites had been visited, so that a play was always being performed at each playground, and thus all were enabled to see the full complement of plays. When a smaller number of plays were performed than was customary, fewer playgrounds would be chosen. Absentees from the processions paid a fine of a pound of wax or an equivalent sum of money to their trade guild. On page 238 of Welford's "Newcastle and Gateshead in the 16th Century" we learn that an ordinary of the Company of Felt Makers, Curriers, and Armourers, dated October 1st, 1546, enjoins the brethren to go together in procession at the feast of Corpus Christi, bear the charges of the lights, pageants, and play, and be

there at the hour assigned them, on pain of forfeiting a pound of wax. The "Acte of Impositions" (not dated) in Surtees' volume on the Merchant Adventurers, sheds some little light on the stringency with which the companies enforced their ordinances. This "Acte of Impositions" reads :—

"It is assented, etc. That every man, beyng free of this Feloship, shall pay yerly to the box, for the sustentacion and charges of the said Feloship xij^d and that to be payed ons in the yere, upon the court day holden the Thursday next before Corpus Christi day, and whatsoever be he that wyll not pay the forsaid duetye, fro tyme that he be asked it ons, by the stewards or bedall, that they shal be dysamyt, and put fourth frome the said Feloship, noder to gyff eleccion nor to go in procession, nor to come to no metyng nor court holden by the said Feloship. And mor over to opon no shope, nor to occupy fetes of merchaundyse, within this town, and to be dysgraded from this Feloship."

An ordinance of 1480, printed on p. xxviii. of vol. 1, Newcastle Merchant Adventurers, provided "that every man of the fellowship within the town should take part in the solemn procession of all the guilds, which took place every Corpus Christi day." The celebration of that day was first enjoined by Urban IV., who was Pope from 1261 to 1264, and in very many towns there was

a Corpus Christi Guild, which embraced most of the mysteries of the town, and these mysteries took part in the pageant plays, and in the procession of the Corpus Christi Brotherhood. An account of the procession is given in Richardson's "Armorial Bearings of the Incorporated Companies of Newcastle-upon-Tyne." In vol. 1 of the Merchant Adventurers' Company, under the date of 3rd March, xx. year of King Edward IV., is given "the Ackit of the prosesion of Corpus Christe Day," which reads :

"Also it is asentit, accordit, and agreit, by the said Felleship, in affermyng of good rewll to be maid and had, the whilk hath lang tym beyn abused emanks thaym, that uppon Corpus Christi Day yerly, in honoryng and worshipping of the solemys procession, every man of the said Felleship beyng within the franchises of this town the said day as it shall fall, shalle apper in the Marcath by vij of clok in the mornynge (or 'after the hye messe be done' according to a later text of this Act) but he haff laytyng by infyrmtye, other ells he of speciall licanse by the said Maister of the said Felleship, wppon payn of a fin by the defaulters to be paid for every syke defaute, j pond wax to the Felleship. Also that thair be a rowll mayd of all the names of the same Felleship, for the said procession, and accordyng to that rowll, callyd by the Clark, the lattast mayd burges to go forrest in procession, with-outyn any contraryyng, wppon [pain] of forfeiting wnto the Felleshipp, for every sik defawte, xij*l*. Provydet also, that all those of the said Felleship that as beyn maires, shereffs and alder-

men, in yerys by passyt, shall go princypall in the sayd solemys procession, accordyng as they war chossen into the sayd officese."

Another Act of the Company provides "thoyis that be unfre be not omyt to go in prossesion."

Evidently the popularity of the Corpus Christi plays was on the wane in 1578. At that period they were never acted save by a special command from the magistrates, for the "Millers' Ordinary" states: "Whensoever the general plays of the town shall be commanded by the mayor they are to play the antiente playe of their fellowship, called 'the Deliverance of the Children of Ifrell out of the Thraldome, Bondage and Servitude of King Pharoh.'" The "House-Carpenters' Ordinary" states, under date July 3rd, 1579, that "when ordered 'the Burial of Christ' pertaining anciently to the said fellowship be played, and the Masons, 'the Buriall of our Lady Saint Mary the Virgin.'" The wording of the order is very quaint. It states: "At all times hereafter for ever whensoever the generall plaies of the towne of Newcastle, antiently called the Corpus Christi plays, shall be plaied, they shall cause to be set forth and played. Among other plays of the said town the plaie antientlye named, 'The Buriall of our Lady

Saint Mary the Virgin.'” The Joiners' Ordinary, dated 1589, shows that “Whensoever it shall be thought necessary by the Mayor, etc., to command to be set forth and played or exercised any general play or martial exercise, they shall attend on the same and do what is assigned them.” During this decade, however, in all towns the performance of the mysteries declined, and in 1589, eleven years after the decadence began to be recorded in the ordinaries of the Newcastle Trade Guilds, the clergy were prohibited from taking any part in miracle plays, which, as already stated, were evidently suppressed in 1603 by James I.

WILLIAM J. G. REDPATH.

Peculiar Public Penances.

SOME curious instances of public penance have been performed at the church of St. Nicholas, now the Cathedral of Newcastle-on-Tyne. It was no uncommon occurrence in bygone times for some offending man, usually for sins of morality, to stand at the door of the church, bareheaded and barefooted, with white wand in hand, clad solely in a linen gown, making confession of his sins, and afterwards to undergo fustigation at the hands of the priest.

A breach of the ancient rights of sanctuary occurred at Newcastle in 1312. A number of persons escaping from justice sought refuge in the church of the Carmelite Friars, but this did not afford a safe shelter, for "certain sons of iniquity, in contempt of God and the liberties of the Church," entered and carried away the fugitives, and delivered them to the civil authorities, by whom they were executed. The pious indignation of the Bishop of Durham was roused at this breach of the rights of the Church, and he directed "that in every church and chapel of the Archdeanery of Durham, on every Sunday and fast-day, the bells

being rung and the candles lit, the greater excommunication should be pronounced upon the offenders, and that diligent enquiry should be made as to their names." It soon transpired that one Nicholas Porter was the chief offender; he submitted and received absolution from the Papal Nuncio on condition that he should undergo such penance as the Bishop of Durham directed. This proved a severe and undignified one. "Every Sunday," it is recorded, "from May to the end of the year, Porter was to stand at the door of St. Nicholas' Church, barefooted, bareheaded, and clad only in a linen gown, and there, in the presence of all the people, to declare his offence in the vulgar tongue, to admit the justice of his punishment, and receive a fustigation at the hands of the parish chaplain. Thence he was to proceed to the church of the Carmelites, repeat his confession, and receive a like chastisement. In addition to this, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday he was to repeat his penance in full at the door of St. Nicholas' Church, Durham, and at the door of the cathedral.* We have not been able to discover the punishment inflicted on the other offenders.

* Rendel's "Newcastle-on-Tyne," 1898.

St. Cuthbert had a strong aversion to women, and for a long period no female was allowed to enter any church or chapel dedicated to him. It is said when Bishop Pudsey commenced building a chapel at the east end of Durham Cathedral for the accommodation of women, large cracks appeared in the walls, and this was regarded as marks of displeasure of the saintly woman-hater, and the project was given up. Later, females were permitted to worship in the Lady chapel.

During his visit to Durham in 1333, Edward III. took up his quarters at the priory, where he was joined by his Queen, and when she retired to rest she was disturbed by the monks, who were alarmed at her presence, and at their earnest solicitation she had to proceed to the castle to complete her rest for the night.

In 1417, two frolicsome maid-servants, belonging to Newcastle, determined to visit the last resting-place of St. Cuthbert, although females were forbidden. To enable them to accomplish their project they put on men's wearing apparel, and proceeded to the tomb. Their crime was discovered, and as a punishment they had to perambulate the church of St. Nicholas on three

festival days, and also that of St. Andrew on three more, in the same men's attire that they wore when they violated the sacred sanctuary of Durham.

Performing the black art was in bygone times a means of bringing trouble to many, and the history of Newcastle supplies an example. Alice, wife of Robert Swan, in 1570, was enjoined to make public confession of the sin of practising the ancient art of divination by means of riddle and shears. It was believed that the names of lovers and culprits might be discovered by holding in a sieve a pair of scissors or shears, and after repeating a mystic invocation, watching the trembling or turning of the sieve at the names of the suspected persons.*

Writing in "Bygone Northumberland," Mr. W. W. Tomlinson asserts that such spectacles as we have noticed were very common right down to the seventeenth century.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

* Rendel's "Newcastle-on-Tyne," 1898.

Curious Church Christmastide Customs.

IN old England no customs have lingered longer than those celebrated at Christmastide, and not the least interesting are those connected with the Church. In town and country bursts of melody from church bells proclaim to high and low the glad tidings of the natal day of Christ. The ringing is performed in some places at midnight, and it is suggested that this is a continuation of the ringing in pre-Reformation times to midnight mass. Barnabe Goorge (1570) thus alludes to the custom :—

“Then comes the day wherein the Lorde did bring His birth
to passe,

Whereat at midnight vp they rise, and euery man to masse.”

Money has been left in several places for this purpose. On the benefaction-table of the church of Ruardean, Gloucestershire, it is stated, “The Reverend Mr. Anthony Sterry, vicar of Lidney, gave by deed, in the 40th year of Queen Elizabeth, 5s. per annum, payable out of an estate called the Glasp, in this parish, for ringing a peal on Christmas Eve, about midnight, for two hours, in commemoration of the Nativity.” Two bells

are rung for fifteen minutes at four o'clock on Christmas Eve at the Collegiate Church, Wolverhampton, the popular interpretation of their strokes being, "Christ born." On Christmas Eve, at Dewsbury, a single bell is tolled, which is called the "devil's knell," indicating that the devil died when Christ was born. A similar custom obtains at Horbury, another Yorkshire town. Early on Christmas morning in other parts of the country it is customary to ring the bells. In the churchwardens' accounts of Kirton-in-Lindsey is an early reference to the practice as follows:—

"1640. It' given to the Ringers at Christenmasse day at morne xij^d."

On Christmas Eve in the olden time the churches were ablaze with light. Christmas was known throughout the Western Church as the Feast of Lights. It was the practice of all the parishioners to attend midnight mass on Christmas Eve, or early masses on Christmas Day. It appears that special arrangements were made by the church officials for providing candles for a general illumination.

Feasting has long been an important feature of this old-time festival. The monks of Great Yarmouth, before the Reformation, annually on

Christmas Day provided breakfast for the inhabitants of the town. With the change of religion the meal was maintained. The funds were furnished by the dean and chapter or the farmer of their parsonage. In the 21st of Elizabeth a grievous plague spread sorrow and desolation in the town. Two thousand people are said to have died in one year. The parsonage house was in a ruinous condition, and in consideration of this and other circumstances, it was agreed that Thomas Osborne, the then farmer, should pay £5 per year to the churchwardens for the use of the town in lieu of the breakfast. As soon as the plague was at an end, the breakfast was resumed, and continued down to the reign of James I., when William Gostlynge, who was the farmer of the parsonage at the time, refused to provide the breakfast or pay an equivalent composition. His conduct was brought under the notice of the dean and chapter, and they obliged him to sign an agreement, "whereby he engaged to pay yearly to the town in lieu of the breakfast £10, which was distributed to poor fishermen, etc., and £5 for his default in before refusing to provide the breakfast." This continued, we gather from Parkin, the local historian, till the making of

a new agreement between the Corporation and Mr. Gostlynge of a grant of nomination and appointment of preachers and ministers in the town, since when it seems that both breakfast and composition shared the fate of all human institutions, and sank into oblivion.*

A pleasant Christmas custom long prevailed at Cumnor, in Berkshire. It was the practice after evening service for those who were liable to pay tithes to proceed to the vicarage, and there partake of bread, cheese, and beer. The repast was no benefaction on the part of the vicar, but for time out of count the parishioners claimed, as a matter of right, that the vicar brewed into ale and small beer four bushels of malt, had four bushels of wheat made into bread, and provided half a hundredweight of cheese. The unconsumed drink and food, next day, after morning prayers, were distributed to the poor. The custom ceased in 1814, when land was allotted to the vicar for his tithes.

Another curious custom used to be kept up at Cumnor, and respecting it are several references in the churchwardens' accounts. It was the perambulation of the parish in Rogation week.

* Parkin's "History of Great Yarmouth."

The procession crossed the Thames at Swinford Ferry, and caught hold of twigs on the opposite shore, and by this act they indicated that the breadth of the river was in the bounds of Cumnor parish. This being done, the ferryman delivered to the vicar a noble (6s. 8d.) in a "bowle" of the river-water, along with a clean napkin. The vicar put his hand into the bowl, took out the coin, dried his hand, and then distributed the water amongst those assembled in commemoration of the custom. The money was spent in ale for the pleasure of those present. The last entry in the churchwardens' accounts bearing on the custom occurs in 1813, and is as follows:—

"Paid expenses at Possissing, £2 7s. od."

The items for expenses were chiefly, we presume, for ale for the thirsty parishioners, and appear under various designations. In the oldest account-book they are called processioning, later possessing or perambulation.

A custom long prevailed at Great Barr for the parishioners, great or small, who betook themselves to the rectory on Christmas Day to receive as much bread, beef, mustard, and vinegar as they could eat. Latterly money was substituted for food. The origin of the custom is unknown. At

Aldridge, in the county of Stafford, in past times, it was customary for the vicar to give a dinner to each individual, young or old, in his parish on Christmas Day. In place of the dinner, sixpence was in later times given by the vicar to each householder. We have failed to find the origin of the custom.

In 1841 was discontinued a custom which had long been kept up at Piddle Hinton, Dorsetshire, of the rector annually, on old Christmas Day, giving to every poor person in the parish—and there were usually about 300—a pound of bread, a pint of ale, and a mince-pie. This appears to have been a voluntary act on the part of the clergyman, for when the custom was abandoned, every inquiry was made to discover if land or money had been left for the purpose, but not any particulars could be found.

At North Clifton, Nottinghamshire, the ferryman and his dog dined at the Vicarage on Christmas Day, and the villagers presented him with a prime loaf of bread. The inhabitants crossed the ferry free, and the gifts were a slight acknowledgment of the privilege enjoyed.

It was customary in bygone times at St. Cuthbert's Church, Ackworth, Yorkshire, to suspend a

sheaf of wheat outside the porch for the benefit of the birds.

Music and feasting appear to have been appreciated by the local authorities at Berwick-on-Tweed. About the commencement of this century four men were known as the Town Waits, and it was their duty to walk before the Mayor, Recorder, and justices, playing on violins, all the way to and from church on Christmas Day—the day of the election of the Mayor—and on November 5th. Four public dinners were held annually, and at these the waits were obliged to attend.*

Not a few of our Church customs are derived from our heathen ancestors. When Christianity was established in this country, it was difficult to wean the people from their old-cherished beliefs and ceremonies, and in some instances Christian teaching was engrafted on Pagan rites and superstitions. The decoration of churches with flowers and green boughs may be traced back to a remote period. Some writers state that “the first Christian church in Britain was built of boughs, and that this plan was adopted as more likely to attract the notice of the people, probably to imitate the temples of Saturn, which were always under the

* Fuller’s “History of Berwick-on-Tweed,” 1799.

oak. The great Feast of Saturn was held in December, and as the oaks of this country were then without leaves, the priests obliged the people to bring in boughs and sprigs of evergreen; and Christians, on the 20th of the same month, did likewise, from whence originated the present custom of placing holly and other evergreens in our churches and houses to show the arrival of the feast of Christmas." In ancient Rome it was customary during the Saturnalia for the inhabitants to ornament their temples and homes with green boughs. The works of the Early Fathers contain frequent allusions to the custom of decorating the church. They approved of the piety displayed in the practice. Several historians and poets notice this subject. Old churchwardens' accounts contain many payments for evergreens at Christmas. Stow, in his "Survey of London," written in 1598, observes that at Christmas every man's house, as also their parish churches, were decked with "holm, ivy, bays, and whatsoever the season of the year afforded to be green." It will not be without interest to draw from old churchwardens' accounts a few items bearing on this matter. The following appears in the books of the parish of St. Mary-at-Hill, London :—

“ 1486.—Holme and ivy at Christmas Eve—iiijd.”

This is a small payment compared with the disbursements at the same church at Easter in the same year. The charge was as under :—

“ Easter.—Three great garlands for the crosses of roses and lavender ; three dozen other garlands for the same—3s.”

From the account-books of St. Peter, Cheap, London, are the next four entries :—

“ 1534.—It'm for holly and ively at X'mas—iiijd.

1567.—Paid the goodman Wooddes to buy holly and ively agaynst Christmas—vjd.

1572.—Payde for hollye Rosemarye and bayes on Christenmas daye for the churche—xijd.

1600.—Rosemary and bayes at Christide, 1599—iijs. iiijd.”

The next item is from the church books of Allhallows, Honey Lane, London :—

“ 1637.—Pd. for rosemary and bayes at Ch'tmasse
.....00. 04. 4.”

In the churchwardens' accounts for the parish of St. Lawrence, Reading, is an entry :—

“ 1505.—It Payed to Makrell for the holy bush agayne Christmas—i.j.d.”

Many more payments similar to the foregoing might be reproduced, but there are sufficient to show the prevalence of the custom in bygone ages.

Gay, who so carefully recorded and noted in

his poems the manners and customs of his age, thus writes :—

“Christmas, the joyous period of the year,
Now with bright holly all the temples strow,
And with laurel green and sacred mistletoe.”

Brand, in his “Popular Antiquities,” alludes to this subject. “I am of opinion,” he says, “although Gay mentions the mistletoe among those evergreens that were put up in churches, it never entered the sacred edifices but by mistake, or ignorance of the sextons; for it was the heathenish or profane plant, as having been of such distinction in Pagan rites of Druidism, and it therefore had its place assigned it in kitchens, where it was hung up in great state, with its white berries, and whatever female chanced to stand under it, the young man present either had a right or claimed one of saluting her, and of plucking off a berry at each kiss. I have made many diligent inquiries after the truth of this. I learnt at Bath that it never came into the church there. An old sexton at Teddington, in Middlesex, informed me that some mistletoe was once put upon the church there, but was by the clergyman ordered to be taken away.” It appears from the writings of Dr. William Stukeley, the

celebrated antiquary of the last century, that in the olden time it was customary to bring mistletoe into York Minster at Christmastide. In his "Medallic History of Carausius," published in 1757-1759, referring to the winter solstice, he thus writes :—"This was the most respectable festival of our Druids, called Yule-tide ; when mistletoe, which they called *all heal*, was carried in their hands, and laid on their altars, as an emblem of the salutiferous advent of the Messiah. This mistletoe they cut off the trees with their upright hatchets of brass, called celts, put upon the ends of their staffs, which they carried in their hands. Innumerable are these instruments found in the British Isles. The custom is still preserved in the north, and was lately at York ; on the eve of Christmas Day, they carry mistletoe to the high altar of the cathedral, and proclaim a public and universal liberty, pardon, and freedom to all sorts of inferior and even wicked people at the gates of the city, towards the four quarters of the heaven."

In "Church Folk-Lore," by the Rev. J. Edward Vaux, a pleasing custom is noticed. For more than half a century the Rev. George Alderson was rector of the secluded parish of Birkin, near Ferrybridge, Yorkshire. It was

customary in his time for the parish clerk to present him with a bunch of flowers before the commencement of the morning service on Christmas Day. The flowers were carried by the rector during the service wherever he went, from desk to pulpit or to altar. In bygone times it was no easy matter to get sufficient flowers at that time of the year, but the clerk always obtained sufficient to make a good nosegay. Mr. Alderson died about 1835.

It was customary at the collegiate church, Ripon, for the singing boys on Christmas Day to bring into the church large baskets full of red apples with a sprig of rosemary in each apple, and to present them to the congregation. In return the youthful choristers received a gratuity of twopence, fourpence, or sixpence, depending on the position of the person making the gift. People still living remember the ancient custom being kept up. About apples there is a wealth of legend and folk-lore. On Christmas Eve and at other times, fruit trees were wassailed. Robert Herrick, parson and poet, has a poem on the pretty superstition. He thus sings :—

“Wassaile the trees, that they may beare
You many a plum and many a peare ;

For more or lesse fruits they will bring,
As you do give them wassailing."

At Chailey, Sussex, on Christmas Eve the following rugged lines were sung at the wassailing of the apple-trees :—

"Stand fast root, bear well top,
Pray the God send us a good howling crop,
Every twig, apple big,
Every bough, apples enow.
Hats full, caps full,
Full quarters, sacks full."

In Devonshire, the Eve of Epiphany was the time selected for performing the wassailing ceremony, and from various accounts of it which have come down to us, it appears to have been enacted in a slightly varied manner in different parts of the county. At Kingsbridge and Salcombe we gather from a book published in 1819, that firearms as well as drink were employed in the ceremony. The author calls the owner of the fruit trees the ciderist, and tells how he and his men, with guns charged with powder and carrying a can or large pitcher of cider, repair to the orchard, and under the branches of a favourite apple-tree drink the following toast three times repeated, and then discharge their firearms in conclusion :—

“ Here’s to thee, old apple-tree,
Whence thou may’st bud,
And whence thou may’st blow !
And whence thou may’st bear apples enow !
Hats full ! caps full !
Bushel—bushel—sacks full !
And my pockets full too ! Huzza ! ”

After draining the pitcher, the party return to the house, only to find the doors bolted by the females. All had to remain outside in the cold until one of the men is able to guess the food on the spot. This usually occupied a considerable time ; at last when divined, the person who had guessed it was rewarded with the edible.*

A rather different account of the ceremony is given in Brand’s “ Popular Antiquities.” It is the custom, said a correspondent to Brand, writing in 1790, for Devonshire people to go after supper into the orchard with a large milk-pan full of cider, having roasted apples pressed into it. Out of this each person in company takes what is called a clayen cup, *i.e.*, an earthenware cup full of liquor, and standing under each of the more fruitful apple-trees, passing those that are not good bearers, he addresses the following words :—

* “ Kingsbridge and Salcombe Historically Depicted,”

“Health to thee, good apple-tree,
Well to bear pocket-fulls, hat-fulls.
Peck-fulls, bushel bag-fulls.”

And then drinking up part of the contents, he throws the rest, with the fragments of the roasted apples, at the tree. At each cup the company set up a shout.

We may state that in bygone times churches were frequently unpaved, and the floors were covered with rushes. On the benefaction board at Deptford Church is an allusion to money left for providing, amongst other bequests, one for purchasing straw at Christmas. “A person unknown,” says the inscription, “gave half a quarter of wheat, to be given in bread every Good Friday, and half a load of rushes at Whitsuntide, and a load of pea straw at Christmas yearly for the use of the church.” Old churchwardens’ accounts contain many references to the custom. In the accounts of All Saints’, Bristol, are the following entries amongst others :—

“1427.—For straw at Christmas—ix^d.

1638.—Payde the Clarke for strewings at Christmas—1s.”

A Derbyshire bequest displays a whimsical predilection for colours. Henry *Greene*, of Melbourne, by will dated 22nd December, 1769,

gave to his sister, Catherine *Greene*, during her life, all his lands in Melbourne and Newton, and after her decease to others in trust, upon condition that the said Catherine *Greene* should give four *green* waistcoats to four women every year, to be lined with *green* galloon lace, and to be delivered to the said four women on or before 21st December, yearly, that they might be worn on Christmas Day. In the Charity Commissioners' Reports we are informed that the premises in Melbourne and Newton, charged with the above mentioned charity, form part of the estate of Lord Melbourne, and in lieu of four waistcoats, which have not been provided for many years, the sum of two pounds annually has been paid to the overseers of the parish of Melbourne; part is disbursed in clothing, and part in bread.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Old English Wedding Sermons.

AMONG the many rubrics of the Church of England prayer-book which serve at the present day to mark the social and religious changes of the last three hundred years, there may be noted for the present purpose that before the last exhortation of the marriage service, which reads: "If there be no sermon, declaring the duties of man and wife," the following exhortation is to be read. This rubric shows that it was formerly the custom for the marriage service to be followed by a sermon, which was either sprinkled with casual applications throughout, or tagged with a particular application at the end, to the happy bride and bridegroom. A few such sermons have survived all the mischances to which printed paper is liable from the latter half of the sixteenth century; a considerable number were printed and published during the seventeenth, and the custom had not died out in the early part of the eighteenth. The few which have not been used for kindling fires, or served the purpose of the butterman, must be looked for

in the library of the British Museum or the Bodleian at Oxford; or may be picked up occasionally by collectors in the shops of dealers in second-hand books.

One of the oldest of these discourses was preached in 1592 by Henry Smith, "the silver-tongued" divine, as he has been called, who took a more genial view of the marriage institution than some of his contemporaries, as well as one more in accordance with the modern humanitarian spirit than was then generally held. "In all nations," he said, "the day of marriage was reputed the joyfulest day in all their life, and is reputed still of all, as though the sun of happiness began that day to shine upon us when a good wife is brought unto us." Alluding to monastic institutions and the doctrine of priestly celibacy, he said: "Before man had any other calling, he was called to be a husband. Therefore it hath the honour of antiquity above all other ordinances, because it was ordained first, and is the ancientist calling of men." He added that God was himself the priest at the wedding of the father and mother of all mankind. The Mosaic account of the creation of woman is, indeed, one of the Biblical incidents which the preachers of the

seventeenth century chose most frequently for the text of a wedding sermon.

Jeremy Taylor reminded his hearers on one such occasion that "marriage was in the world before sin," and went on to say that "it is in all ages the greatest and most effectual antidote against sin." One of the quaintest remarks on the obvious truth that the sexes were created for each other was made by Donne, who says that "When God had made Adam and Eve in Paradise, he did not place Adam in a monastery on one side, and Eve in a nunnery on the other, and so a river between them." William Secker, a Nonconformist minister at Tewkesbury, about the end of the seventeenth century, published a sermon with the quaint title, "A Wedding Ring fit for the finger; or, the Salve of Divinity on the Sore of Humanity," his text being, "And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman." Says the preacher, "The rib of which woman was made was taken from under man's arm. As the use of the arm is to keep off blows from the body, so the office of the husband is to ward off blows from the wife." Henry Smith, dealing with the same text, enlarges upon this point as follows: "The wife was not made of

the husband's head, for St. Paul calleth the husband the head of the wife ; nor of the foot, for he must not set her at his foot. If she must not match with the head, nor stoop at the foot, where shall he set her then ? He must set her at his heart. And, therefore, she which should lie in his bosom was made in his bosom, and should be as close to him as his rib, of which she was fashioned."

Wife-beating, it may be inferred from a passage in this sermon, was not an unknown vice in the seventeenth century, for the homily on the state of matrimony, which dates from the same period, pronounces it "the greatest shame that can be, not so much to her that is beaten as to him that doth the deed." The homilist exhorts the bridegroom, "even where thou mightest beat her, yet, for the respect of the fear of God, to abstain and bear patiently her great offences," and reminds him that it is a shame to beat a maid-servant, much more a wife, "and that even the laws" which the Paynims have made "discharge the wife from all obligation of having any further company with him that doth smite her." This view does not seem to have commended itself to the authors of the

Divorce and Matrimonial Causes' Act; but it shows that the "right" of wife-beating was widely believed in by the masculine half of humanity in those days, and as widely exercised.

The use of the ring in marriage served many of the seventeenth century preachers as a theme for wedding sermons, the more frequently, perhaps, for the controversy on the subject which raged fiercely at one time between the temporarily proscribed church and the Puritans. The Parliament of 1653 passed a Marriage Act by which the use of the ring was abolished, it being enacted that "no other marriage whatsoever, within the Commonwealth of England, after the 29th day of September, 1653, shall be held or accounted a marriage according to the laws of England." The Act was not passed without much opposition, and Mr. Lathbury, in his "History of the Book of Common Prayer," shows that during the seven years it remained on the statute book, couples were occasionally married according to the form prescribed in the Prayer Book, paying the penalty for the "offence" to the churchwardens. This is said to have been done on the occasion of

the marriage of one of the Protector's daughters to Lord Fauconbridge.

Dr. Hardy, who preached at the church of St. Dionysius, in the city of London, published a wedding sermon in 1658, in which he had much to say on the subject of the ring. "The ring given in marriage," he said, "is but one, to teach the man that his love must be singularly contracted to the person of his wife." It is circular because the circle is the symbol of eternity. It is placed on the left hand, and on the fourth finger of that hand, "concerning which Aulus Gellius acquaints us from Appion that the Egyptians, in anatomising men's bodies, observed *nervum quidem ab eo uno digito ad cor hominis pergere et providere* (that particular finger to have a small nerve passing from it to the heart). The truth of this I leave to skilful anatomists to determine. The moral use which the man ought to make of it is good, that, putting a ring on such a finger, he is admonished of that near union there ought to be between, and dear affection in his heart to his wife." Anatomists have, since Dr. Hardy's time, thoroughly discredited Appion and the Egyptian physiologists by showing that the ring finger is in no way

distinguished, in the matter of nerves, from its fellows; though, so long does it take mankind to unlearn the lessons of the past, there are many persons who still believe in the existence of that undiscovered nerve supposed to link the fourth finger of the left hand with the heart.

The incident of the marriage at Cana, recorded in the fourth Gospel, carries the palm in respect of its frequency as a text for wedding sermons, and there are few of these discourses still extant which contain no reference to it. Even the Puritan minister, William Bradshaw, took a genial view of the story. "The merry Greeks of this world," he said, "are afraid of being merry when Christ sits at the table with them. See here the contrary; even in the kingdom of Christ, and in his house, there is marrying and giving in marriage, drinking of wine, feasting, and rejoicing even in the face of Christ." Bishop Latimer also drew a sanction for merry-making at weddings from this incident of the beginning of his Master's ministry. He supposed that the people who invited Jesus and His mother to the marriage feast were of the poorer class. "Their common drink," he says, "was water; but now at the wedding

they had wine, because they might be merry at the solemnity of God's ordinance."

Dr. Cosin, afterwards Bishop of Durham, preached a wedding sermon on the same text in 1624, taking occasion to contrast the marriage customs of that day with that exemplified in the instance referred to. "The custom then," he observed, "was to call grave matrons to the wedding of young people, that so they might have a pattern of modesty and gravity, and godliness and honesty, to imitate all their life after. Now, as the world goes in our days, these customs are almost forgotten ; for we use to call the youth of the parish, and the minstrels of the country. Music and melody are the two matrons we look after ; Venus for the Virgins, and Bacchus for Christ. A sad difference ! As if men and women meant to purchase jollity enough for one day of their marriage, and repentance enough for all the days of their life after. This is a fashion for Gentiles." It must be admitted that the reprehensible customs of the period in connection with weddings, such copious details of which are given by Brand in his "Popular Antiquities," were more than enough to justify the contrast.

In turning to another frequently recurring sub-

ject of the wedding sermons of the latter part of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, the influence of the Reformation must be taken into account as affecting the views held by both the clergy and the laity of the relations of the sexes. The doctrine that the celibate state was more holy than that of marriage was passing into the limbo of dead faiths. Jeremy Taylor seems to have oscillated between two opinions on this point, as if while his heart told him that marriage was the natural and best state, his head, filled with the views of many of the Fathers of the Church, led him to doubt whether celibacy was not better. Dr. Donne spoke more decidedly on the subject. "We depart," he said, "absolutely from those old heretics who did absolutely condemn marriage; and we must have leave, too (which we are always loath to do), to depart from the rigidness of some of those blessed Fathers of the primitive Church who found some necessities in their times to speak so very highly in praise of continency and chastity as reflected somewhat upon marriage itself, and may seem to imply some undervaluation of that."

Bishop Latimer, though he lived in the fiercest heat of the Reformation, did not hesitate to boldly

proclaim the view that marriage was the will of God, His purpose in the creation of the sexes. He exhorted the unmarried of both halves of humanity not to fear to take mates to themselves ; neither the example and teaching of ascetics, nor a selfish fear of the responsibilities of the marriage state, ought, he said, to deter them from so doing. "They which are married already," he says, "may comfort themselves in all afflictions, adversities, and miseries that come by marriage ; namely, that they are in the favour of God, and that God hath joined them together in that estate."

One of the most curious of the wedding sermons of the early years of the seventeenth century was preached by Robert Wilkinson, in the royal chapel at Whitehall, on the occasion of the marriage of Lord Hay. Taking for his text Proverbs xxxi., 14, "She is like a merchant ship," the preacher dealt with the parallel in the quaintest manner. The world, he said, was a troubled sea, in which man would soon be lost if he were alone in it. An unmarried man is like Jonah ; some whale or another swallows him up. Left to "sink or swim, or shift for himself, comes a wife, like a ship, and wafts him home." God built this ship in Paradise. She was then a

pleasure-boat, and she was wrecked ; wherefore God converted her into a merchant ship, for “ use against the troubles of the sea.” A ship, though one of the hugest of things, is governed and directed by a small piece of wood, the rudder. So the wife, though greatest in the house, should be governed by a little word or wish of the husband. “ She must not be a fisherman’s boat ; she must not be like St. Peter’s ship, for Christ did call no she-apostles.” Many women, he observed, were taking upon themselves to “ chalk out discipline for the Church. To such preaching women it may be answered as St. Bernard sometime answered the image of the Blessed Virgin at the great church at Spire, in Germany. Bernard was no sooner come into the church but the image straight saluted him, ‘ Good morrow, Bernard.’ Whereat Bernard, well knowing the juggling of the friars, made answer out of St. Paul. Oh, he saith, your ladyship hath forgot yourself ; it is not lawful for women to speak in the church.”

THOMAS FROST.

A Wedding Custom.

A QUAIN custom at marriages prevailed in several places in the northern counties, and perhaps in other parts of England. At Colne Church, Lancashire, it was the practice whenever there was a fashionable wedding, for the senior scholar of the adjoining Grammar School, at a given signal, to enter the church, and thus address the newly-married pair as they left the altar :—

“ God prosper these your nuptials
With much peace ;
And grant that love
Between you may increase.
May happy minds and virtuous hearts
Unite in virtuous love,
And may you love your bridegroom,
And you your lovely bride,
And ever bless the day
The nuptial knot was tied.

May happiness on earth
Your portion be,
And may you always live
In endless felicitie.
We wish you health,
Wealth, worth, and gold,

As apples in bright
Orchards may be told.
We wish that you
May never disagree
Till lambs and wolves
Do dwell in unitie."

At the conclusion of the rhyming address, the bridegroom usually presented the boy with one of the larger silver coins.* The custom was popular at Skipton, in Yorkshire, and the happy couples were met by school children at the church doors, and greeted with the following rhyme:—

"God prosper long your nuptials with much peace,
And mutual love betwixt you still increase ;
If happy minds and pious hearts unite,
Your present love will future times delight.
Christ pour upon you things that needful be,
And crown your nuptials with felicity !
We wish you as much health, wealth, silver, gold,
As apples in the orchard may be told.
We wish that you may never disagree
Till wolves and lambs join in unity."

In some places the rhyme was as follows:—

"Most courteous bridegroom, and most lovely bride,
We come as custom hath us tied ;
Therefore to us pray something now afford,
And we will sing your praise with one accord."

After the receipt of a gift in money, the children

* Carr's "Annals and Stories of Colne," 1878.

concluded the nominy, as the address was called, with the following lines :—

“ Thanks to you, bridegroom, and most lovely bride ;
May Heaven protect you, and your steps well guide,
Till worn with age you leave this earthly cell,
And soar aloft, where endless pleasures dwell ! ”

Writing in 1882, Mr. W. H. Dawson says the last two stanzas were obtained from one whose years had already far exceeded the ordinary span of life.*

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

* Dawson's " History of Skipton," 1882.

Irregular Marriages.

A MISCHIEVOUS element in the social and domestic life of the past were the Fleet marriages and others of a similar irregular character. At the present time it is difficult to fully realise the evil that for a long period existed in London through these weddings. The marriages in the chapel of the Fleet Prison, and in its boundaries called the Rules, were more numerous than in other parts of the Metropolis where similar usages prevailed. Fleet Prison was used for the confinement of poor debtors. The chaplain increased his income to a considerable extent by marrying in most instances at a lower rate than was usually charged in the churches of the City. Here, too, the ceremony might be performed in secret. The earliest notice of a Fleet marriage is in 1613, and the first record of a wedding in the register is in 1674. Clandestine marriages did not commence at the Fleet Prison until the latter year, and were brought about by an order of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners directing that no further clandes-

tine marriages were to be performed at the chapels of the Savoy and at May Fair. The many secret marriages at the latter chapels had been the cause of much misery, and were a scandal to the Church. A greater evil arose by clandestine marriages being permitted in the Fleet Prison and the district adjoining it. It was apparent to not a few persons in reduced circumstances, publicans and others, that places of irregular marriages would meet with patronage, and yield considerable profit. Tavern-keepers and shop-keepers fitted up chapels in their houses in which marriage might be celebrated. In some instances publicans retained the services of a clergyman at a fixed weekly salary. The landlord usually performed the duties of clerk. It was in some cases customary for the parson and the publican to share the profits obtained, but a few of the lesser degraded clergymen fitted up chapels in their own homes or lodgings. Couples were constantly solicited to repair to these houses to be joined together in wedlock. Pennant, the well-known naturalist and antiquarian author, was born in 1726, and in the third edition of his work entitled "Some Account of London," published in 1793, are some allusions to this subject. "In

walking along the street in my youth, on the side next to the prison," says Pennant, "I have often been tempted by the question, 'Sir, will you be pleased to walk in and be married?' Along this most lawless space was hung up the frequent sign of a male and female hand conjoined, with 'Marriages performed within' written beneath. A dirty fellow invited you in. The parson was seen walking before his shop; a squalid profligate figure, clad in a tattered plaid nightgown, with a fiery face, and ready to couple you for a dram of gin or a roll of tobacco." Most interesting and important information on this subject may be gleaned from old newspapers. Under date of June 29th, 1793, the following appears in the *Weekly Journal*:—"From an inspection into the several registers of marriages kept at the several ale-houses, brandy-shops, etc., within the Rules of the Fleet Prison, we find no less than thirty-two couples joined together from Monday to Thursday last without licenses, contrary to an express Act of Parliament against clandestine marriages, that lays a severe fine of £200 on the minister so offending, and £100 each on the persons so married in contradiction to the said statute. Several of the above-named brandy-

men and victuallers keep clergymen in their houses at 20s. per week, hit or miss; but it is reported that one there will stoop to no such low conditions, but makes, at least, £500 per annum, of divinity jobs after that manner." J. S. Burn, in his "History of Fleet Marriages," published in 1834, supplies the names of eighty-nine Fleet parsons, the most notorious being John Gayman or Gainham; he was vain of his learning, and was styled Doctor Gayman, "Bishop of Hell." Mr. Burn collected copies of the announcements of the Fleet parsons to attract the patronage of the public. The following are the best examples:—

G. R.

AT THE TRUE CHAPEL.

*At the Old Red Hand and Mitre, three doors from
Fleet Lane, and next door to the White Swan,
Marriages are performed by authority by the Reverend
Mr. Symson, educated at the University of Cambridge,
and late Chaplain to the Earl of Rothes.*

N.B.—WITHOUT IMPOSITION.

"J. Lilley, at ye Hand and Pen, next door to the china-shop, Fleet Bridge, London, will be performed

G

R



AT the Hand and Pen and Golden Pott
 at the Ditch Side, *Edward Skirmy*
of St. James's Coachman and Robert
and several Simkins of the same place
 were MARRIED at the Fleet LONDON,
 on the 27 Day of *February* 1717
 according to the RITES and CEREMONIES of
 the CHURCH of ENGLAND, as appears by
 the Register in the Custody of

Thos. Skirmy
Matthew Wilson

the solemnisation of marriages by a gentleman regularly bred at one of our Universities, and lawfully ordained according to the institutions of the Church of England, and is ready to wait on any person in town or countrey.”

“Marriages with a licence, certificate, and Crown-stamp, at a guinea, at the New Chapel, next door to the china-shop, near Fleet Bridge, London, by a regular-bred clergyman, and not by a Fleet parson, as is insinuated in the public papers; and that the town may be freed of mistakes, no clergyman being a prisoner within the Rules of the Fleet dare marry, and to obviate all doubt, the chapel is not on the verge of the Fleet, but kept by a gentleman who was lately chaplain on board one of his Majesty’s men-of-war, and likewise has gloriously distinguished himself in defence of the King and country, and is above committing those little mean actions that some men impose on people, being determined to have everything conducted with the utmost decorum and regularity, such as shall always be supported by law and equity.”

We gather from a paragraph in the *Daily Post* of July 4th, 1741, that to serve their own selfish ends some Church officials were ready to make use of a Fleet parson:—“On Saturday last,” it is recorded, “the churchwardens of a certain parish in the City, in order to remove a load from their own shoulder, gave 40s. and paid the expenses of a Fleet marriage to a miserable blind youth, known by the name of Ambrose Tally, who plays on the violin in Moorfields, in order

to make a settlement on the wife and future family in Shoreditch parish. To secure their point they sent a parish officer to see the ceremony performed. One cannot but admire the ungenerous proceeding of the City parish, as well as their unjustifiable abetting and encouraging an irregularity so much and so justly complained of as the Fleet matches. Invited and uninvited were a great number of poor wretches in order to spend the bride's parish fortune."

The press of the past was not so unfettered as it is at the present, or it would have been more severe on the shameful proceedings on the part of the churchwardens.

We read about this period of the infamous part a boy was induced to play in which a blind parson figures. It is reported that a man named Oates, a plyer for and clerk to weddings at the Bull and Garter, had to appear at the Guildhall charged with hiring for half-a-guinea John Funnell, a poor boy, who sold fruit in Fleet Bridge, to personate one John Todd, and marry a woman in his name. This was done, and to better accomplish the villainous act, a blind parson was engaged to perform the ceremony. Oates was committed for trial at the next Sessions.

In 1738, we find that Daniel Wigmore, noted for marrying people within the Rules of the Fleet, was tried and convicted before the Lord Mayor for selling spirituous liquors contrary to law. Other charges of a more serious nature were brought against Fleet parsons. We obtain from an important letter printed in the *Grub Street Journal*, in 1735, a vivid picture of the manners and customs of the period as they prevailed in the Rules of the Fleet. Here is presented, by a writer of the period, particulars of the shameful proceedings permitted in this lawless district. The communication is long, but valuable:—"The ministers of wickedness," says the writer, "ply about Ludgate Hill, pulling and forcing people to some pedling ale-house or a brandy-shop to be married, even on a Sunday stopping them as they go to church, and almost tearing their clothes off their backs. To confirm the truth of these facts, I will give you a case or two which lately happened:—Since Midsummer last a young lady of birth and fortune was deluded and forced from her friends, and by the assistance of a wry-necked, swearing parson married to an Atheistical wretch, whose life is a continued practice of all manner of vice and

debauchery ; and since the ruin of my relation another lady of my acquaintance had like to have been trepanned in the following manner : This lady had appointed to meet a gentleman at the Old Play-house in Drury Lane, but extraordinary business prevented his coming. Being alone when the play was done, she bade a boy call a coach for the City. One dressed like a gentleman helps her into it, and jumps in after her. 'Madam,' says he, 'this coach was called for me, and since the weather is so bad, and there is no other, I beg leave to bear you company ; I am going into the City, and will set you down wherever you please.' The lady begged to be excused, but he bade the coachman drive on. Being come to Ludgate Hill, he told her his sister, who waited his coming but five doors up the court, would go with her in two minutes. He went, and returned with his pretended sister, who asked her to step in one minute, and she would wait upon her in the coach. Deluded with the assurance of having his sister's company, the poor lady foolishly followed her into the house, when instantly the sister vanished, and a tawny fellow in a black coat and black wig appeared.

Madam, you are come in good time ; the Doctor

was just a-going !' 'The Doctor,' says she, horribly frightened, fearing it was a madhouse, 'what has the Doctor to do with me ?' 'To marry you to that gentleman ; the Doctor has waited for you these three hours, and will be paid by you or that gentleman before you go.' 'That gentleman,' says she, recovering herself, 'is worthy a better fortune than mine,' and begged hard to be gone. But Doctor Wryneck swore she should be married ; or, if she would not, he would still have his fee, and register the marriage from that night. The lady, finding she could not escape without money or a pledge, told them she liked the gentleman so well, she would certainly meet him to-morrow night, and gave them a ring as a pledge, 'which,' says she, 'was my mother's gift on her death-bed, injoining that, if ever I married, it should be my wedding-ring.' By which cunning contrivance she was delivered from the black doctor and his tawny crew. Some time after this I went with this lady and her brother in a coach to Ludgate Hill in the day-time to see the manner of their picking up people to be married. As soon as our coach stopped near Fleet Bridge, up came one of the myrmidons. 'Madam,' says he, 'you want a parson !' 'Who

are you ?' says I. 'I am the clerk and register of the Fleet !' 'Show me the chapel,' at which comes a second, desiring me to go along with him. Says he : 'That fellow will carry you to a peddling ale-house.' Says a third, 'Go with me, he will carry you to a brandy-shop.' In the interim comes the doctor. 'Madam,' says he, 'I'll do your job for you presently. 'Well, gentlemen,' says I, 'since you can't agree, and I can't be married quietly, I'll put it off till another time ;' so drove away." The correctness of the foregoing communication is confirmed, as we have said, by Pennant. This grave scandal could not be tolerated any longer by the more thoughtful of our countrymen. Chancellor Hardwicke, 1753, brought a bill into Parliament "making the solemnisation of matrimony in any other but a church or chapel, and without banns or licence, felony punishable by transportation, and declaring all such marriages null and void." The measure was strenuously opposed by Henry Fox, the Duke of Bedford, and not a few other prominent people in and out of Parliament. Finally, a large majority voted in favour of the bill, and it passed into law, coming into operation on Lady Day, 1754. The day prior to this were entered into

one register no fewer than 217 marriages. We may from this statement gather how popular these weddings were with a certain section of the community.

The Fleet registers were, in 1840, declared inadmissible in a Court of Law. The Government had, however, in 1821 purchased from several of the marriage houses the registers, and deposited them with the Registrar of the Consistory Court of London. Some of the records are curious, and it will not be without interest if we reproduce a few examples. Not a few of the certificates were antedated. The following are two amongst the many :—

“5th November, 1742, was married Benjamin Richards, of the parish of St. Martin’s-in-the-Fields, Br., and Judith Lance, do. sp., at the Bull and Garter, and gave [a guinea] for an antedate to March ye 11th in the same year, which Lilley comply’d with, and put ’em in his book accordingly, there being a vacancy in the book suitable to the time.”

“June 10, 1729, John Nelson, of ye parish of St. George, Hanover, batchelor and gardener, and Mary Barnes, of ye same, sp., married. Cer. dated 5 November, 1727, to please their parents.”

Some of the candidates for matrimony only went half through the marriage service. Two instances are thus recorded :—

“1742, May 24.—A soldier brought a barber to the

Cock, who, I think, said his name was James, barber by trade, was in part married to Elizabeth; they said they were married enough."

"A coachman came, and was half married, and would give but 3s. 6d., and went off."

In one of the registers it is stated :—

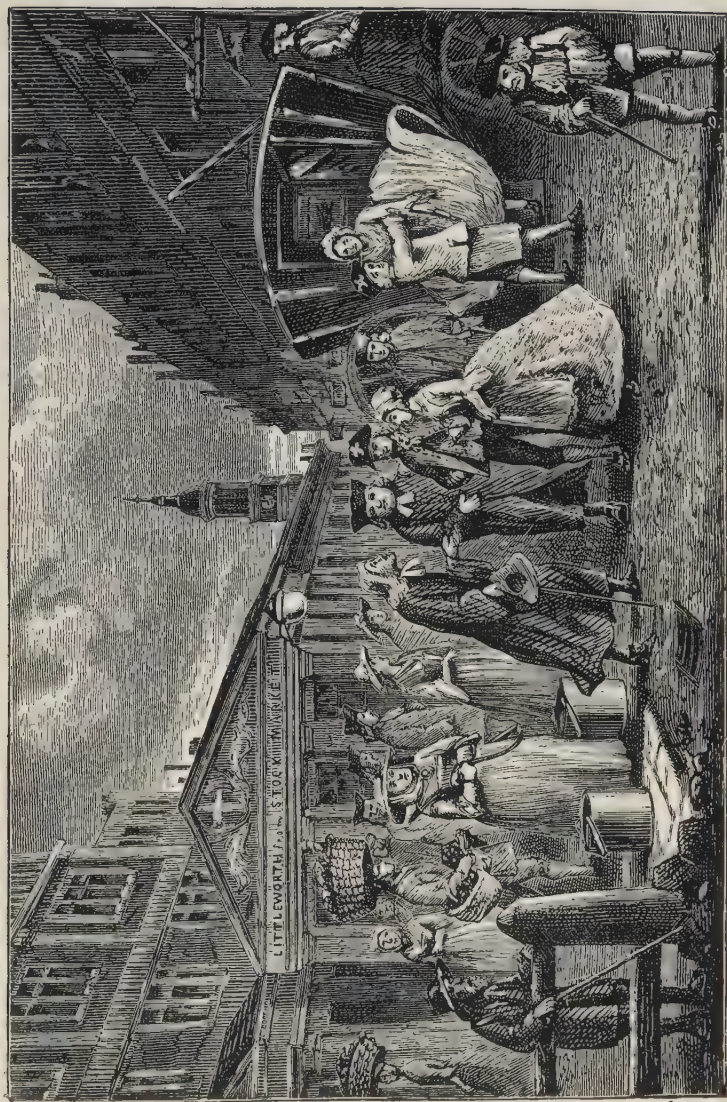
"Mr. Comyngs gave me half-a-guinea to find a bridegroom, and defray all expenses. Parson 2s. 6d., husband do, and 5s. 6d. myself."

"We find," says a contributor to Chambers's "Book of Days," "one man married four times under different names, and receiving five shillings on each occasion for his trouble."

Some of the couples cheated the clergymen. It is stated :—

"Married at a barber's shop next Wilson's, viz., one Kerrils, for half-a-guinea, after which it was extorted out of my pocket and for fear of my life delivered."

A pair stole the parson's clothes-brush, while another couple ran away with the marriage certificate and left unpaid for a pint of wine. A note in a memorandum book belonging to one of the parsons says :—"Had a rowe for four hours about the money." It will be seen from these statements that the parson's position was often far from pleasant, and amongst the rough-and-ready people repairing to him for matrimony he sometimes met more than his match. The man named



FLEET PARSONS AND FLEET MARRIAGES.

in the following entry appears to have had more regard for the woman's money than a desire for matrimony :—

“May 20, 1742.—A man and woman came to the Bull and Garter: the man pretended he would marry the woman, by which pretence he got money for marrying, and to buy a ring, but left the woman by herself, and never returned, upon which J. Lilley takes the woman from the Bull and Garter to his own home, and gave her a certificate, as if she had been married to the man.”

We have a record of a woman marrying a woman :—

“October 1, 1747.—John Feriens, gentleman's servant, of St. Andrew's Holborn, and Deborah Nolan. J. F. was discovered, after the ceremony was over, to be in person a woman.”

Not a few aristocratic personages are amongst the patrons of the Fleet; the candidates ranged from pauper to peer, from the menial maid to the leader of fashion. With a reference to a union that made a sensation at the time, we close our studies of irregular marriages: Henry Fox, afterwards Lord Holland, fell in love with Lady Caroline Lennox (eldest daughter of the Duke of Richmond), asked for her, but was refused; he stole her away, and was married in 1744 at the Fleet.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Burials Without Coffins.

IT was customary in bygone times to bury the poor without coffins, and the interment in a coffin in 1632 of a young man in humble circumstances at Lichfield was regarded as a remarkable occurrence. At Melbourne, Derbyshire, up to the year 1694, it appears to have been the practice to commit to the earth rich and poor without coffins. It is recorded on reliable authority that even Sir Robert and Lady Hardinge were laid to rest simply wrapped in woollen. We find an early allusion to the disregard of a coffin in the will, bearing date of 1407, of John de Burton, rector of Aldwarke, Yorkshire. He directed that his body should be brought for burial into the place lately provided by himself, and set apart for the interment of his body, in the south side of the choir of the chancel of the church, and he inhibited his executors from preparing for his body "a wooden coffin, or other coverings, unless only one linen cloth," to enwrap his body in.* In still more remote times, we gather from Bede that in the

* *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. 1, Surtees Society,

Saxon era the poor were buried without coffins, a usage also followed by the Normans.

The members of religious orders were generally buried uncoffined. In a picture in the National Gallery of St. Jerome, by Cosimo Roselli (who lived from 1439 to 1506), in one of the small compartments at the bottom of the picture, is a representation of the funeral service of a hermit, and it shows that no coffin is being used.* We learn from Matthew of Paris, that the monks of St. Albans were interred without coffins until the time of Abbot Warren, who died in 1195. He directed that all dead brothers were to be buried in stone coffins as being more decent. Matthew of Paris regarded the innovation as one designed to please the multitude. The first abbot of the Cistercians in England since the Reformation, the Rev. John Bernard Palmer, was buried *circa* 1855 in the Chapter House, Loughborough, without a coffin.

Thomas Hearne died in 1735, and he wrote as follows:—"Formerly it was usual to be buried in winding-sheets without coffins, and the bodies were laid on biers. And this custom was practised about threescore years ago, though even

* Andrews' "Church Treasury," 1898.

then persons of rank were buried in coffins, unless they ordered otherwise. Thomas Neill, of Hart Hall, in Queen Elizabeth's time, is represented in a winding-sheet in Cassington Church. It seems, therefore, he was not buried in a coffin, especially since his effigy in the winding-sheet there was put up in his lifetime. In the monkish times stone coffins were much in vogue, especially for persons of quality, and for others bearing distinguishing titles, such as archbishops, bishops, abbots, abbesses, etc. Even many of the inferior monks were sometimes so buried, though otherwise the most common way was a winding-sheet. Yet even many persons of distinction, instead of coffins, were wrapt in leather, as were Sir William Trussell and his lady, founders of Shottesbrook Church and Chantry, in Berkshire, as may be seen in my edition of Leland's 'Itinerary'; and it was in such leathern sheets or bags that others were put, that were laid in the walls of churches."*

Some early references to this custom occur in the parish books of Louth, Lincolnshire. In the churchwardens' accounts for 1521-2 a memorandum as follows appears :—

* "Reliquiæ Hearnianæ," p. 534.

"He (the bellman) shal bere and convey the chiste or chistes as neydys shall require to euery place in the Towne wher any corse is, or corses, as it shall happen. He shall take for sellying of herse eury tyme he selles it id. and no more."

An entry relating to parish coffins occurs in the accounts of 1593 :—

"Pade for ye mendyng of bothe ye coffens in ye
churche - - - - - xiijd."

From the churchwardens' accounts of the church of St. Michael, Cornhill, London, is the following :—

"1554 Itm paide for mendynge of the coffen
that carrys the corses to churche, for bourde,
neylles & workemanshippe - - - xiid."

In the churchwardens' accounts of St. Margaret's, Westminster, are entries relating to this usage, and the following may be quoted as examples :—

"1562.—Item.—For the chardge of a winding-
sheete for a poure woman which died in
Thambre [The Ambry] - - - xiid."

"For bringing of straw from Mr. Worleyes for the
deceased girle aforesaid, for making cleane
of the house, for her winding sheete, and
burieing of her - - - xvd."

In the vestry minutes of St. Helen's, Bishopgate, London, is the following resolution, under date of March 5th, 1564 :—

“Item.—That none shall be buryd within the church unless the dead corpse be coffined in wood.”

The following entry appears in the town records of Lyme, Dorsetshire :—

“1569.—Three yards of cloth to make a shroud iiis. iiid.”

According to a note in the parish register of Paynings, Sussex, on “The eighteenth day of April, 1608, was buried John Sherry, a poor man, that died in the place stable, and being brought half naked with his face bare, the parson would not bury him so, but first he gave a sheete, and caused him to be sacked therein, and they buried him more Christianlike, being much grieved to see him brought so unto the grave; and at this time did one Thatcher dwell in the place.” The parson’s indignation, says Dyer, was probably roused not because the body was brought in a winding-sheet, but on account of the insufficiency of it.*

An item in the churchwardens’ accounts of Bilderton, in the county of Suffolk, clearly indicates an interment without a coffin :—

“1645.—For a sheete to berey lifficus kime’s wiff - iis. vid.”

Much curious information is included in a volume issued in 1877, under the title of

* Dyer’s “Social Life as told by Parish Registers,” 1898.

"Gleanings from the Municipal and Cathedral Records relative to the City of Exeter," by William Cotton, F.S.A., and the Venerable Henry Woollcombe. In the section devoted to Exeter during the Great Rebellion, particulars are presented of the formation of a new burial-ground. The regulations state that the gravedigger "shall not receive for any grave there to be made for any corpse to be buried without a coffyn above the sum of five pence, and not above the sum of xviid., for any grave with a coffyn."

We find in a "Table of Dutyes," of Shore-ditch Church, for the year 1664, references to the amounts to be paid for interments without coffins as follows:—

"For a buryall in ye new Churchyard, without									
a coffin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	00.00.08
For a buryall in ye olde Churchyard, without									
a coffin	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	00.00.07
For the grave making and attendance of ye									
Vicar and Clarke on ye enternment of a									
corpse uncoffined, the churchwardens to pay									
the ordinary duteys (and no more) of this									
Table."									

The vestry of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, passed at a meeting, held August 6th, 1672, the following:—

“Ordered, that whensoever any person or persons begg the burial-ground of the Churchwardens, if the said person or persons will bury in a coffin, he or they shall pay the full dues of burial, according to the table of fees or church duties ; but if they shall bury in a sheet only, the dues shall be remitted at the discretion of the Churchwardens.”

The foregoing regulations had not been observed, and on November 3rd, 1674, it was renewed, and to have it enforced the right of granting free graves was limited to the senior churchwarden. Later, a modification of the order was made, and the vestry passed the following resolution :—

“June 5, 1691.—Ordered that all such persons who shall hereafter be buried in the Pest House ground, for whom the fees shall be begged off and remitted, shall and may be buried in coffins, any order of Vestry or custom to the contrary notwithstanding.”

The foregoing orders are extracted from the “Records of St. Giles’s, Cripplegate,” a volume compiled by the Rev. W. Denton, M.A. (London, 1883). He was for many years vicar of the parish.

In 1691 the Deanery of Durham was filled by Dean Comber, and, in his “Companion to the Temple,” is a note from which we may infer it was customary to have burials without coffins. “The ancient Christians,” says Dean Comber,

“were wont to give a parting kiss of charity to the body just when it was about to be put into the grave, to declare their affection, and to evidence that he died in the unity and peace of the Church, for which still we say, ‘Our dear brother or sister,’ which pious custom is yet observed in the Greek Church, and also in the northern parts of England by the near relations, who usually come near and kiss the deceased before he be put in the grave.”

In the registers of Halsham Church, Holderness, Yorkshire, is a table of fees, in force about 1700, the following amongst others:—

“For a Burial in ye Church	-	-	-	00.03.00
For a Burial in the Churchyard	-	-	-	00.01.06
For a Corpse uncoffined	-	-	-	00.00.09.”

From the diary of Philip Henry we have the following account of a burial without a coffin, towards the close of the seventeenth century:—

“leiftenant Williams, of Llangollen, in Denb., having layn in prison some time upon the writ of excom. cap., was sick, and had favor of ye Bp. to return home awhile, & dy’d, & after 10 dayes lying in ye Churchyard was, by Commissary Edwards’ order, taken up & bury’d by his Friends in his garden. Having no coffin, it was the more offensive to ye sexton, who fel sick upon it.”

We have extracted the preceding notice of

Williams from "The Old Stone Crosses of the Vale of Clwyd," by the Rev. Elias Owen, M.A. (London, 1886). The late parish clerk of Aber, Carnarvonshire, John Parry, informed Mr. Owen that he remembered the last person in that parish who was buried in a sheet. He stated that formerly all the poor were so buried. They were carried to the grave, he said, in a wooden coffin, which was the property of the parish; but they were deposited in the grave wrapped up in a common sheet.

There are traces of many of these old parish coffins in England, and a good example is still preserved at Easingwold Church, Yorkshire. We give a picture of it, and the following description from *The Reliquary* of July, 1864:—"The central length is 6ft. 7in.; length of side from shoulder to head, 1ft. 5in.; width of the foot, 9in. The lid was originally fixed to the shell by three iron hinges on the right hand side of the body, one at the foot, another at the shoulders, and a third midway between the other two. It is somewhat larger than the shell itself, having over-lapped the top about three-quarters of an inch on the left side (where it seems to have had some fastenings, which have been taken off), and

at the head and foot. The lid is now split down the centre, the two parts being held together by five rough iron bands, one near the head, another near the foot, and the remaining three at nearly equal distances from them and from each other. The corners have also been protected in a similar manner. The sides are nine inches in height, and on both of them at seven inches from the shoulder, and thirty inches from the foot, are iron rings about an inch and a half in diameter.



EASINGWOLD PARISH COFFIN.

All the iron seems to have been very rough, but is now so much rusted as to leave its original condition a matter of some doubt. The coffin is of oak, and very black with age, much decayed, and the wood exceedingly thin. It apparently stood on four legs, there being four circular holes at the bottom—one at the head, one at the foot, and two across the centre, and in the bottom one a very small part of the leg remains, it having probably been broken off, while the rest were

knocked out." There is a tradition that the last time it was used was for a vagrant found dead by the road-side. At the close of the eighteenth century its disuse was brought about by a new vicar, who was shocked at the practice of burying the poor without coffins.

In the adjoining parish of Kirkby Wirke it was formerly customary to bury the poor without coffins. The practice was discontinued on account of the shroud in which a body was wrapped bursting, and causing an unseemly exhibition.

At Stockton-on-Tees a new vicar was the means of the use of the parish coffin being discontinued. A note bearing on the subject appears in the Rev. John Brewster's history of the town, published in 1796. "Soon after the Rev. George Walker, vicar (1715), came to reside at Stockton-on-Tees, it is recorded that 'he was called upon to inter a poor person.' When they came to the grave the attendants were preparing to take the body out of the shell or coffin which contained it. He inquired what they were doing, and was informed that the same coffin was used for the funerals of the poor, and that it was intended to serve again. He insisted on it being put into the ground with the body, and, from this time,

took care to prevent a repetition of such an act of indecency."

At Howden Church, Yorkshire, are the dilapidated remains of an oak parish coffin, bearing on it the date 1664.

In old parish accounts we have found several entries relating to parish, or, as they are sometimes called, church coffins. From the vestry book of St. Oswald's Church, Durham, are drawn the following items:—

" 1614-15.—Pd. for mendinge the bell wheele,	
and for makinge the coffins for to bringe the	
dead copse to church in	- - - - ijs.
Pd. for bordes for same	- - - - xxd.
Pd. for bred and drinke for workmen att that	
tyme	- - - - - iiijd."

The same parish records for 1666-7 contain an entry as follows:—

"For church coffin - - - - - 14s."

It is stated in the transactions of the Cumberland and Westmoreland Antiquarian and Archæological Society, vol. xiv., 1897, that in the churchwardens' accounts of Cockermouth, 1673-4, is an item as follows:—

"ffor a new public coffen for the use of the parish - 14s."

No subsequent charge is made for a parish

coffin in the accounts of the churchwardens, but the foregoing was mentioned for many years in the inventory of church goods appended to the annual statement of the accounts of the church ; it is named as " One coffen for ye publicke use of ye parish."

According to a contributor to *Notes and Queries*, November 17th, 1855, George Psalmanazer, the notorious literary forger, who died in 1753, earnestly requested that his body should not be enclosed in any kind of coffin, but be decently laid in a shell without a lid or other covering. It is also related by the same writer that amongst the memorials of a West of England family the following occurs :—

" April 30, 1701.—Died Sir N—— L ——, at his house in H——, and was buried in the outer chancel of the said church on the 3rd of May, at 12 of the clock at night, without a coffin, according to his own directions. He was in his 88th year."

There are some important notes on this theme in " Church Folk-Lore," by the Rev. J. Edward Vaux, M.A., F.S.A. (London, 1894). " It is possible," says Mr. Vaux, " that some may not have noticed that the Burial Service in the Book of Common Prayer is worded on the apparent supposition that no coffin is employed. The word

coffin is not used; it is always 'the corpse,' or 'the body.' Thus: 'When they come to the grave while the corpse is made ready to be laid into the earth,' etc.; upon which rubric Wheatley, whose well-known book appeared in 1710, comments thus: 'When the body is stripped of all but its grave clothes, and is just going to be put into the grave,' etc. And again in a subsequent rubric it is enjoined that 'earth shall be cast upon the body,' not upon the coffin."

We have found in Scottish Church history numerous references to burials without coffins. Dr. Andrew Edgar, in his "Old Church Life in Scotland," vol. ii. (Paisley, 1886), has several notes on this subject. In the Session Records of Mauchline, he states, are payments for winding-sheets without coffins. For example, in the year 1675, it is stated on June 22nd there was "given for two winding-sheets to John Gordon and his wife, £3 10s."; also "for a winding-sheet to George Boyd, £2 2s. 6d.," and "for a sheet to John Allen, £1 15s." In September in the same year there was also "given for a sheet for a poor man, £1 15s." Dr. Edgar was informed by a clerical friend near Montrose that the custom of burying the poor without coffins was discontinued

over a century ago. A minister in Sutherlandshire wrote to the doctor, saying that at Rogart "in the beginning of this century local paupers were still occasionally " interred without coffins, and that a minister of the parish, who died in 1873, spoke of the matter as "an objectionable practice, of which, as a Highlander, he was more than half ashamed." This old minister used to tell also, that "poor men who had neither sons nor near relatives, whom they could trust to secure them more decent burial, sometimes prepared their own coffins with such suitable pieces of planking that came in their way."

The uncoffined corpses were conveyed to the graveyard on a bier. The General Assembly in 1562 ordained that "a bier should be made in every country parish to carry the dead corpse of the poor to the burial-place, and that those of the villagers in houses next adjacent to the house where the dead corpse lieth, or a certain number out of every house, shall convey the dead corpse to the burial-place, and bury it six feet under the earth." This bier, says Dr. Edgar, was sometimes called the parish coffin; and, as illustrating the ancient use of the word coffin in this sense, a modern dictionary gives the following quotation

from an old churchwarden's journal:—"For mendynge of coffin that carry the corses the church." Similar entries frequently occur in old Scottish records.

A worthy old minister in Galloway some time ago tried to induce the local authorities to revive the old method of burying the poor and friendless without coffins. He pointed out that it would decrease the rates, and that such burials were Scriptural, and had Divine precedent. "He proposed accordingly," says Dr. Edgar, "in the Parochial Board, that 'a slip coffin should be made for the poor, out of which the poor bodies might be slipped into their narrow bed.' The proposal, however, found no favour or support on the Board, and met with such an outcry in the parish as a piece of cruel parsimony, that the well-meaning minister went ever afterwards by the nickname of 'Slip.'"

In Ireland in bygone times it was customary to bury the poor uncoffined. The old walls of the historic town of Youghal, in the county of Cork, partly enclose the graveyard of the collegiate church of St. Mary, and in the wall a coffin-shaped recess is made, where in years ago, when not in use, was kept the public coffin for the

poor. The Rev. Samuel Hayman, B.A., says that many uncoffined interments took place at Youghal he could testify. During fourteen years of ministerial connection with St. Mary's Church, he



RECESS FOR PARISH COFFIN, YOUGHAL CHURCHYARD.

witnessed the opening of several graves and vaults, in which human remains lay *in situ*, without a trace of having been at any time enclosed in coffins. The oldest Youghal parochial

accounts now extant are dated in the year 1701, and in these, while the churchwardens enter "shrouds" for the poor, no mention is made of "coffins," *e.g.* :—

"Paid for eight bandells of Linen Cloath for									
a Shrowde for Dermeen's wife, at 2½d.									
per bandell	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	00	01 08
Paid for Shrowd, for one of the Poore's									
children	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	00	01 10.*

During the terrible famine of 1846-7 in Ireland, says Mr. Hayman, while in most places the bodies of the dead received all the accustomed observances of sepulture, there were too many instances of corpses being interred without shroud or coffin. In two or three districts, as in mitigation of such indignity, the employment of a common or parish coffin was again resorted to. About 275,000 persons are supposed to have perished during this famine, which lasted six years.†

In the *Cork Constitution* of August 17th, 1863, it was stated :—"In many parts of Prussia, only one coffin is used in burial of the bodies of all paupers. The body is carried in the coffin to the

* *The Reliquary*, vol. v., 1864-5.

† Walford's "Famines of the World," 1879.

grave, and then shot into the open earth ; and the coffin [is then] taken back to be employed for a similar purpose." In curious contrast to this state of things in a Christian country, and in the second half of the nineteenth century, it is stated in the Rev. E. Blomfield's "View of the World," 1807, that the semi-pagan Laplanders buried the dead in coffins.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Old English Funeral Sermons.

FUNERAL sermons are a custom of very great antiquity, though one which, in many instances, may be regarded as "more honoured in the breach than in the observance." In former times they were very general; Misson, in his "Travels in England," observing that "the common practice is to carry the corpse into the body of the church, where they set it down upon two trestles, while either a funeral sermon is preached, containing an eulogium upon the deceased, or certain prayers said, adapted to the occasion." Gough, the antiquary, traces the custom to the early ages of the Church, when orations were delivered at the graves of martyred Christians. From these, he says, "have followed funeral sermons for eminent Christians of all denominations, whether founded in esteem, sanctioned by fashion, or secured by reward. Our ancestors, before the Reformation, took especial care to secure the repose and well-being of their souls by masses and other deeds of piety and charity. After that event was

supposed to have dispelled the gloom of superstition, and done away with the painful doctrine of purgatory, they became more solicitous to have their memories embalmed, and the example of their good deeds to be held forth to posterity. Texts were left to be preached from, and sometimes money to pay for such preaching. Gratitude founded commemorative sermons as well as commemorative dinners for benefactors." The usual fee for the preaching of a funeral sermon seems to have been from half-a-guinea to a guinea.

The adage which associates the vice of lying with epitaphs may, with equal justice, it is to be feared, be transferred to funeral sermons. Fuller remarks that "when one has to preach the funeral sermon of a most vicious and generally hated person, all wondered what he would say in his praise, his foes hoping that, for his fee, he would force his conscience to flattery. "For one thing," said the minister, "this man is to be spoken well of by all, and for another thing he is to be spoken ill of by none. The first is because God made him, the second because he is dead." Therefore, as the Latin proverb says, "of the dead, speak no evil," an exhortation of

which the clergyman of a London parish was mindful when, having received a guinea to preach a sermon at the funeral of a woman of notoriously bad character, on the condition that he said nothing of her but what was well, limited his personal remarks to the facts that the deceased was born in Camberwell, lived in Clerkenwell, and died in Bridewell, the "house of correction" for the city of London, and so called because it was situate in the parish of St. Bride, or St. Brigid.

The oldest funeral sermon which has come under the writer's notice, and certainly one of the oldest still extant, was preached by Bishop Fisher on the "month's mind" of the Countess of Richmond, the mother of Henry VII. The words "mind day," "month's mind," and "year's mind," are of frequent occurrence in wills and deeds of endowment of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and mean days whereon the souls of our ancestors were (after their deaths) had in special remembrance and some religious service held, with candles burning on the altar. The first mention of these observances is found in Bede's "Ecclesiastical History," and traces of them occur frequently in family records and local

antiquities. Fabian says, for instance, that Sir Robert Chichely, who was twice Lord Mayor of London, and died in 1469, provided by his will for "a good and competent dinner" to be given on his "mind day," to a certain number of poor men, being householders in the city, "if they might be found." Fabian himself, who died in 1512, gave directions in his will for the observance of the custom, and was very particular in specifying the number of candles to be used on the occasion. Brand says that the custom, under the same words, still existed in his time in Lancashire, but elsewhere the observances were commonly called "anniversary days," of which the "In Memoriam" notices occasionally observed in provincial newspapers may be regarded as a survival.

To return to Bishop Fisher's sermon, which was printed by Wynkin de Worde, it was notable for the copiousness of the personal details of the deceased lady's life and character. Taking for his text a passage in the fourth Gospel, the bishop compared the countess to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, who, he said, was "a woman of noble blood, to whom by inheritance belonged the castle of Bethany." Proceeding to discourse

of the different kinds of nobleness, he said, "this nobleness of blood they have which descended of noble lineage. Beside this, there is nobleness of manner, without which nobleness of blood is much defaced, for as Boecius saith, it is for that thereby noble men and women should be ashamed to go out of kind from the virtuous manners of their ancestry before. There is another nobleness which ariseth in every person by the goodness of nature, whereby full often such as come of right poor and unnoble fathers and mothers have great abilities of nature to noble deeds. Above all, there is a fourth manner of nobleness, which may be called an increased nobleness, as by marriage and affinity of more noble persons such as were of less condition may increase in higher degree of nobleness."

All these kinds of nobleness the preacher claimed for the deceased countess. "First," he said, "she came of noble blood, lineally descended from King Edward III., within the four degrees of the same. Her father was John, Duke of Somerset; her mother was called Margaret, right noble as well in manner as in blood, to whom she was a very daughter in all noble manners, for she was bounteous and liberal to

every person of her knowledge or acquaintance. Avarice and covetousness she most hated, and sorrowed it much in all persons, but specially in any that belonged unto her. She was also of singular easiness to be spoken unto, and full certain answers she would make to all that came unto her. Of marvellous gentleness she was unto all folks, but specially unto her own, whom she trusted and loved right tenderly. Unkind she would not be unto no creature, nor forgetful of any kindness or service done to her before, which is no little part of very nobleness. She was not vengeable, nor cruel, but ready anon to forget and forgive injuries done unto her, at the least desire or motion made unto her for the same. Merciful also and piteous she was unto such as was grieved and wrongfully troubled, and to them that were in poverty or sickness, or any other misery."

She had also, the preacher said, "the nobleness of nature. She had, in a manner, all that was praisable in a woman, either in soul or body. She was of singular wisdom, far passing the common rate of women. She was good in remembrance, and of holding memory; a ready wit she had also concerning all things, albeit they

were right dark : right studious she was in books, which she had in great number, both in English and in French, and for her exercise, and for the profit of others, she did translate divers matters of devotion out of the French into English."

We have next a curious relation of the deceased lady's choice of a husband, which, strange as it is, is vouched for by the worthy bishop. He says: "In her tender age, she, being endued with great towardness of nature and likelihood of inheritance, many sued to have her in marriage. The Duke of Suffolk, which then was a man of great experience, most diligently procured to have had her for his son and heir. Of the contrary part, King Henry VI. did make means for Edmund, his brother, then Earl of Richmond. She, which then was not fully nine years old, doubtful in her mind what she were best to do, asked counsel of an old gentlewoman whom she much loved and trusted, which did advise her to commend herself to St. Nicholas, the patron and help of all true maidens, and beseech him to put in her mind what she were best to do. This counsel she followed, and made her prayer so full often, but specially that night when she should the morrow after make answer of her mind

determinately. A marvellous thing! That same night, as I have heard her tell many a time, as she lay in prayer, calling upon St. Nicholas, whether sleeping or waking she could not assure, but about four o'clock in the morning one appeared unto her, arrayed like a bishop, and naming unto her Edmund, bad her take him unto her husband; and so by this means she did incline her mind unto Edmund, the King's brother."

In passing from the foregoing example of a memorial sermon of the Plantagenet times to the early years of the last century, we find evidence of the growing disuse of the custom of such commemorative discourses. The funeral sermon of the first Duke of Devonshire, who died in 1707, was preached in All Saints' Church, Derby, by Dr. White Kennet, Archdeacon of Huntingdon, and chaplain in ordinary to Queen Anne. Referring to the custom then undergoing a change, the preacher observed: "This was a grateful practice of the Jews, and was far from being condemned by our blessed Lord. 'She did this for my burial,' was an excuse at least for what others thought a prodigal expense of the very precious ointment. The truth is, our

private and parsimonious funerals of honourable persons have been of late a degenerate custom, which our brave and pious forefathers did disdain. This new privacy had been more allowable if humility and modesty had alone introduced it, if it never had been owing to a narrowness of mind, or even to a want of natural affection. And now, what Christian can imagine but that these obsequies of the dead are more agreeable, and the solemnity more decent and devout, than this last office is, attended, and as it were, consecrated with a funeral sermon. Such commemoration was the good old way of the primitive Church, sunk indeed into contempt and disuse by the superstitions of another kind in Popery, yet restored at the Reformation into serious and rational discourses, still fit to be retained, as good words in season, as the dead yet speaking, when the apparent object of mortality strikes awe and impression on the eyes and hearts of men; and the greater the object the greater the impression.

“Whence, then, comes a modern way of interring our deceased fathers (especially those of the highest fortune and figure) in an affected secrecy and silence, with no praises of the dead,

no instruction to the living? Is it that some modest people have forbid that office for fear of being flattered? Is it that some preachers have exceeded in commendation and characters both truth and decorum? Or has not the late omission been rather a love of novelty and change, the dropping a custom because it was ancient, and the affecting new modes, not in manner of life only, but in that of death and burial? Or has it not been sometimes owing to a more unhappy cause, men's lives and actions not deserving, rather dreading, a memorial of them? They themselves or their relations have been conscious that to bury them in silence was at least the safest way. A veil becomes every face that will not bear the light, and thus the only proper eloquence to say nothing where there is nothing praiseworthy and of good report." The preacher concluded his discourse with an eulogium of the deceased, setting forth his noble lineage, his high character, and his illustrious connections, "not," he said, "as given me by an unequal judge, but chiefly as transmitted from some worthy and distinguished persons, who are best able to discern truth and merit, and who are very much above the making any false or flattering report."

Whether Dr. White Kennet had in his mind any recent occasions on which the custom of a funeral sermon had been omitted for any of the reasons which he mentions, is a question which it would be difficult to answer, and one which is really of little importance. Whether any or all of the causes of which he spoke had any influence in bringing about the decline of the custom of funeral sermons, the fact remains that it fell, to a great extent at least, into disuse about the time to which he refers. That they are still preached occasionally is probably due, in some degree at least, to the fact that the Sunday after the funeral affords a fitting occasion for such a discourse, when the fellow-worshippers of the deceased are all present. It is not often, however, at the present day, that they are printed, the exceptions being, as a rule, those preached in commemoration of the deceased pastor of a Nonconformist congregation, and sold for the benefit of his widow.

THOMAS FROST.

Compulsory Attendance at Church.

THE dictum of an eminent statesman that “force is no remedy” is found to have less ready acceptance the farther back we pass in the history of the world. Toleration is of gradual growth, and if we look to the earliest centuries we find that the liberty of the individual was far more inadequately recognised than it is at the present day. Authority, in the form of Church or King, decided what was for a man’s good, and often compelled observance of customs and adherence to popular tenets against which his innermost soul revolted. From the earliest times it may be said that religious services have been imposed upon the multitude, but it must be remembered that in many instances religion was so closely associated with the State that non-attendance at church became regarded no less as a political than as a religious offence. Even in Roman days there might have been found men who did

“Build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun ;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery ;

And prove their doctrine orthodox
 By apostolic blows and knocks ;
 Call fire and sword, and desolation,
 A godly, thorough Reformation."

In the reign of Decius, Dr. Stoughton tells us, people were required to testify that they adhered to the national worship by sacrifices, and by taking part in extravagant banquets in honour of the gods. Inquisitorial inspectors were appointed to see that the law was duly observed, and those who had forsaken the new religion in favour of the older faith were supplied with "certificates of apostacy," one of which, recently discovered, declares that a "man of seventy-two, with a scar on his right eyebrow, had sacrificed and poured out libations."

It is interesting to note how in later centuries the Christians themselves demanded observance of their own religion, and enforced attendance at festivals and services of their church, whenever they had the power to do so. Not until the sixteenth century, however, when England was torn in conflict between Romanist and Protestant, did the laws relating to public worship press heavily upon the common people. What had formerly been an obligation, or a matter of conscience, now became a matter of duty to the

State. Previously heretics and schismatics who absented themselves wholly or in part from church attendance were censured with anathema, as appears from several canons of the Council of Gangra, and partial absence was visited with suspension from communion. Spiritual disabilities were now to be augmented by those of the physical order. In the fifth and sixth years of the reign of King Edward VI. an Act was passed providing that all inhabitants of the kingdom "shall diligently and faithfully, having no lawful or reasonable excuse to be absent, endeavour themselves to their parish church or chapel accustomed, or, upon reasonable let, to some usual place where common prayer shall be used,—on Sundays and holidays,—upon penalty of forfeiting for every non-attendance twelve-pence, to be levied by the churchwardens to the use of the poor." The public records then were not so carefully kept as they are at the present day, or a search in ancient archives might reveal many cases of laggardly worshippers and Sabbath-breakers paying their twelve-pence to the churchwardens.

In the reign of Elizabeth the measures providing for church attendance attained a

magnitude and a severity that they had never before possessed. During her first year upon the throne the Queen confirmed the statutes of Edward VI. Her Majesty recognised the value of the Church as an instrument for the consolidation of her power, and sought to bring all her subjects into conformity with its practices. Against all forms of non-allegiance to the Establishment she waged war. She remembered with painful vividness the dangers of Roman Catholicism, and while fearing that her power might be jeopardised if the ancient faith gained the ascendancy once more, she embarked on a course of compulsory conversion. The rising influence of Puritanism and Nonconformity likewise aroused feelings of uneasiness in her mind, and against their professors likewise she determined to act. The people soon learned that the measures for providing for church attendance were not to be disregarded with impunity, but after more than twenty years it was decided that further and more severe action should be taken against all recusants.

In the year 1580, after reigning for nearly a quarter of a century, the Queen, acting on the advice of her ministers, caused to be introduced

into Parliament a severe law entitled, "An act to retain the Queen's subjects in due obedience," by which it was made treason for any priest or Jesuit to seduce any subject from the Establishment to the Romish religion. "If any shall reconcile themselves to the religion they shall be guilty of treason; and to harbour such above twenty days is misprision of treason. If any one shall say mass he shall forfeit 200 marks and suffer a year's imprisonment; and they that are present on hearing mass shall forfeit 100 marks, and a year's imprisonment." This, however, was not considered sufficient to restrain the anti-Establishment tendencies of the time, and it was further enacted "That all persons who do not go to church or chapel or other places where Common Prayer is said according to the Act of Uniformity shall forfeit £20 per month to the Queen, being thereof lawfully convict, and suffer imprisonment till paid. Those that are absent for twelve months shall, upon certificate made thereof unto the King's Bench, besides their former fine, be bound with two sufficient sureties in a bond of £200 for their good behaviour. Every school-master that does not go to Common Prayer shall

forfeit £10 a month, be disabled from teaching school, and suffer a year's imprisonment."

Although directed mainly against Roman Catholics, this measure was, as an old writer pointed out, a "two-edged sword" which cut down both Papists and Puritans alike; while a reverend and more serious critic asserted that the Act made merchandise of the souls of men, "for 'tis a sad Case to sell Men a License to do that which the Receivers of their money conceive to be unlawful." The increase of the amount of fine, from 12d. a Sunday under the Act of Uniformity to £20 a month, was also felt to be an act of unmerciful injustice, and raised considerable indignation among non-sympathisers with Church doctrine and practice.

With advancing age Elizabeth's fear of Puritans and Nonconformists grew in intensity, and twelve years after the passing of the last Act we have mentioned, her Majesty thought it necessary to take further measures of what she regarded as wise precaution. A bill, severe in principles and details, was brought in, having for its object the punishment of persons obstinately refusing to go to church, and persuading others to impugn the Queen's authority in ecclesi-

astical matters. Its provisions were as follows :
“ That if any Person above the age of 16 shall obstinately refuse to repair to some Church, Chapel, or usual Place of Common Prayer, to hear Divine Service, for the Space of *one month*, without lawful Cause ; or shall at any time, 40 Days after the End of this Session, by printing, writing, or express Words, go about to persuade any of her Majesty’s Subjects to deny, withstand or impugn her Majesty’s Power or Authority in Causes Ecclesiastical ; or shall dissuade them from coming to Church, to hear Divine Service, or receive the Communion according as the Law directs ; or shall be present at any unlawful Assembly, Conventicle, or Meeting, under Colour or Pretence of any Exercise of Religion, that every Person so offending, and lawfully convicted, shall be committed to Prison without Bail, till they shall conform and yield themselves to come to Church, and make the following Declaration of their Conformity :

“ I, A. B., do humbly confess and acknowledge that I have grievously offended God in contemning her Majesty’s godly and lawful government and authority, by absenting myself from church and from hearing divine services contrary

to the godly laws and statutes of the realm, and in frequenting disorderly and unlawful conventicles under pretence and colour of exercises of religion ; and I am heartily sorry for the same, and do acknowledge and testify in my conscience, that no other person has, or ought to have any power or authority over her Majesty. And I do promise and protest without any dissimulation, or colour of dispensation, that from henceforth I will obey her Majesty's statutes and laws in repairing to Church and hearing divine services ; and to my utmost endeavour will maintain and defend the same."

It was to be expected, in a country where Non-conformity was rife, that some would be found courageous enough to stand out against the Queen's authority in matters of religion, and refuse to make the required declaration. For those who so refused to submit, it was provided that within three months they should "abjure the realm, and go into perpetual banishment," and if they refused to depart within the time limited by Quarter Sessions or a Justice of the Peace, or returned to the country without having first obtained from the Queen a license to do so, they were to suffer death without benefit of clergy.

Some of the more moderate Puritans endeavoured to pursue a middle course, whereby they could save their conscience and their worldly goods, and preserve their own safety at the same time. They adopted the expedient of entering the church when Common Prayer was almost over, and just in time to receive the sacrament. Others, however, determined on a more upright line of action. The Browists and the Barrowists refused to go at all; they persisted in meeting secretly; and underwent imprisonment; and two of them, Barrow and Greenwood, suffered death at Tyburn, on April 6th, 1592, rather than renounce their liberty of conscience.

In 1601 another bill to punish voluntary absence from church was brought in, providing for a forfeiture of 12d. each Sunday, to be levied by distress on a warrant from a justice of the peace, but owing to the existence of the previous law we have mentioned, this latter measure was not persisted in. King James I., after the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot, ordered a thanksgiving service to be held every 5th of November, and re-enacted the penalty of one shilling for non-attendance at church, unless satisfactory reasons for absence were laid before a justice of the peace.

Before leaving this period, it may be well to turn to the neighbouring country of Scotland, and see how compulsory worship was enforced there. As under the reign of Elizabeth people were required to attend divine service and receive the Lord's Supper not simply on religious or ecclesiastical grounds, but as a political device for sifting out Romanist enemies of the established political order; so in later times Scottish Episcopalians were driven to the Kirk, not only because they were Episcopalians, but because they were Jacobites. It is with an earlier age, however, that we are more immediately concerned. A Scottish Sunday was once a day of mirth, sport, and festivity, but from the time of the Reformation it began to assume that severity which is its chief characteristic at the present time. The authorities tried to make people abstain from work and recreation on that day, and in Edinburgh even walking in the public parks and on the Castle Hill was forbidden. On October 30th, 1560, the Town Council ordained "that in all time coming the holy day called the Sabbath Day or day of rest, commonly called Sunday, be in all time coming kept holy by all manner of persons indwellers within this burgh or resorting within the

same, so that none, of what estate whatever they be, make market or merchandise, open booth-doors, or exert any kind of worldly operation thereon; but that upon the said day all persons be astricted to be present at the ordinary sermons at well after noon as before noon, and that from the last jow of the bell to the said sermons to the final end." Marketing was forbidden, and the people were required to obtain sufficient meat on Saturday to last till Monday. Later on, the people were required to "keep the preaching under the pain of eight days' imprisonment, and payment of 20s." In 1587, we find "all persons to resort to the preachings, and none to pass to the fêtes or the plays the time of the sermons afore or after noon on the Sundays"; and in the following year Dickson, the town trumpeter, was warded and put in irons for an offence of this description. In such laws we can detect the origin of that stern observance of the Sabbath prevailing in Scotland to-day.

In England various acts of William and Mary confirmed the laws of church attendance, and a further confirmation took place in the thirty-first year of George III., exceptions, however, being made in favour of Dissenters. During the eigh-

teenth century there had been a general and observable decline in public worship, and congregations had been augmented only by numbers who went for no better reason than because it was the established custom to do so. Gradually the laws for attendance became less recognised by the authorities and the people alike, and although certain individuals suffered for their non-attendance at public worship, it was found that they were the victims of personal spite rather than the opponents of an official endeavour to secure the fulfilment of the law.

Strange as it may appear, some instances are to be found in the present century. Professor Amos mentions that in the year 1817 Sir Montague Burgoyne was prosecuted at the Bedford Spring Assizes for having been absent from his parish church for several months; and was only saved from the penalties of his "misdeeds" by proving that he was too unwell to attend. When the Prison Inspectors reported to the House of Lords in 1841, they declared that eleven years previously no fewer than ten persons were in prison for refusing to attend public worship in their parish church. "A mother was prosecuted by her own son."

Fortunately all legal enactments of this character have now disappeared, having been abolished in the ninth and tenth years of the reign of Queen Victoria, and religion is better and purer for their removal. It still remains within the power of the bishops, however, under an old law, to oblige members of the Church of England to present themselves at church on every Sunday in the year, as well as on twenty-eight saints' days ; and if people do not obey willingly, it shall be "lawfull to all archebusshopps and busshopps to enurre of every persone that shall offend in the premisses, and to punishe such offender, and to enjoyne him such penannce as should be thought mete." Something of the old spirit also remained in the workhouse master who only a year or two ago ordered a female inmate to be restricted to a diet of bread and water as a punishment for being dissatisfied with the theological views of the chaplain, and refusing to attend chapel.

ERNEST H. RANN.

St. Paul's Walk.

IN past days the naves of churches were frequently used for purposes that would not now be tolerated. The chancel was, as a rule, screened off and defended with gates that were opened only at the time of service ; but the rest of the building was the public place of the parish, where meetings were held, and matters of common interest discussed. It is in human nature, when liberty has been granted, to run to license ; and hence we need not be surprised that this use soon led to abuse. Private business, as well as public, began to assert its presence ; gossips and loungers made the church their ordinary resort for scandal and chatter ; market folk brought their wares for disposal, or at best made the aisles of the church a short-cut, entering by one door and leaving by another. Thus the church became a fashionable gathering-place for the gallants of the day, and a recognised thoroughfare for the people of business.

This was naturally the case with our cathedrals more generally than with the parish churches.

The former afforded more space for a promenade ; they were in most cases surrounded by a larger population ; and the existence of the cathedral close provided an excuse for passing from the city to the canons' residences through the church, in this way creating the first idea of the thoroughfare. Such a public way long existed through the west end and the cloisters of Durham, and was used at Worcester down to 1750. Sir Thomas Gooch, when Bishop of Norwich, put a stop to a similar usage in his cathedral in 1740 ; and Laud, in the course of a Visitation, enquired whether such a practice was in vogue in Salisbury.

By far the most famous instance of this singular abuse of consecrated ground was in London, where "Paul's Walk" was practically a public highway—at once a thoroughfare, a market, and a fashionable promenade. In the North, in the middle of the seventeenth century, we are told that "The gentry affected much to walk, to see and be seen," in the cathedrals of Durham and York ; but the public and secular use of St. Paul's nave was so well known, and so fully accepted, that our literature provides many allusions to it.

Complaint was made of the growth of this abuse so early as the time of Edward III., and again under Richard III. At the Reformation things naturally got worse; for, beside the multitude who simply resorted thither in thoughtlessness or carelessness, there were not a few who rejoiced to make an ostentatious display of their disregard for sacred places. In the reign of Mary, therefore, an Act of Parliament was passed to check this desecration of the Church. From this Act it appears that "beer, bread, fish, flesh, fardels of stuff, etc.," were commonly carried to and fro, and that even horses, mules, and cattle were driven through the cathedral. According to Pilkington, "the south alley was for usury and popery, the north for simony and the horse fair; in the midst for all kinds of bargains, meetings, brawlings, murders, conspiracies; and the font for ordinary payments of money." The hubbub caused by all this bargaining and traffic was, as Bishop Earle declares, "a kind of still roar or loud whisper." Another bishop, Corbet, when pleading for funds for the repair of the cathedral, urges that all the citizens were bound to contribute, since all of them made use of the building in one way or another. "Are we not beholden to

it," he asks, "every man, for the body or the choir, for a walk or a warbling note, for a prayer or a thorough path?"

Lawyers had their well-known pillars where their clients might meet them; chapels and cloisters were clogged with merchandise, or became mere workshops; and servants in search of fresh places found "Paul's Walk" the best spot for finding employers. Obviously the Act of Queen Mary was sadly needed. Whether or not it proved effectual at the time, the reform was not long-lived, and the Legislature was called upon to take further measures in the following reign. Even the progress of divine service did not check the flow of traffic, the chatter of the loungers, and the chaffering of the tradesmen and their customers. "Yt is a great disorder in the church," says a presentment of Elizabeth's time, "that porters, butchers, and water-bearers, and who not, be suffered (in special tyme of service) to carrye and recarrye whatsoever, no man withstandinge them, or gainsayinge them."

Hard by a small door on the north side of the cathedral, and not far from the font, the following rhymed notice was affixed:—



INTERIOR OF OLD ST. PAUL'S, ST. PAUL'S WALK.

“ All those that shall enter within the church dore,
With burthen or basket, must give to the poore ;
And if there be any aske what they must pay
To this box, 'tis a penny ere they passe away.”

Either the penalty was too small, or the enforcement of it was not sufficiently rigid, to attain the object contemplated by the author of the lines.

Among Elizabethan writers who allude to the secular usage of St. Paul's, we find the dramatists taking a leading place. Ben Jonson uses the cathedral as the locality for several scenes in his play, “ Every Man out of his Humour,” and makes his characters meet and converse freely there. Shakespeare, in so many things in advance of his time in taste and idea, seems to have realized the scandal of this use of a church, in which his contemporaries so generally acquiesced ; for there is surely intention in the parallel he draws between the cathedral and the market, when he makes Sir John Falstaff say of Bardolph, “ I bought him in Paul's, and he'll buy me a horse in Smithfield.” Thomas Dekker, writing at about the same period, says of the noisy crowd that frequented “ Paul's Walk,” “ What swearing is there, what

shouldering, what jostling, what jeering, what biting of thumbs to beget quarrels!" Similar is the picture suggested in the lines of Bishop Corbet of Norwich, who calls this consecrated place

"The walk

Where all our Britaine sinners sweare and talk."

Among modern writers we may turn to Harrison Ainsworth's novel of "Old Saint Paul's" for a lively description of the scenes witnessed in the cathedral in the days of Charles II.

No effort of Parliament was able effectually to suppress this scandal, and it finally met with a more tragic rebuke. The fire of 1666 destroyed the "walk" itself, and thus burnt out the walkers. An attempt was made to transfer the abuse to Westminster Abbey, but happily it did not take root there. A few years later, when the new St. Paul's had risen from the ashes of the old, an effort was again made to revive these secularities; but an Act of William and Mary threatening disorderly frequenters of the church with a fine of twenty pounds proved a more wholesome check than the penny fine of earlier days; and "Paul's Walk" was heard of no more.

To two proverbial expressions this evil custom gave a temporary currency. "Paul's Walkers" was at one time a recognised name for a class of "men about town," the idle, gossiping loungers, who swore and bet and quarrelled within the sacred walls. About midway up the central alley of the cathedral stood the tomb of Sir J. Beauchamp, which was, however, commonly said to be that of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. From this circumstance arose the saying that those who, for lack of other hospitality, paced the cathedral fasting, while others went to dinner, had "dined with Duke Humphrey." Thus the phrase became a proverb for being dinnerless. The fashionable hours for gossip and promenade in "Paul's Walk" were from eleven until noon, and again from three to six; Duke Humphrey's guests, no doubt, might have been found there even during the unfashionable interval.

GEO. S. TYACK.

Spur=Money.

IT was stated in the daily papers that a curious incident occurred on a Sunday, May 22nd, 1898, as the congregation was leaving St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. The choir boys, in accordance with an ancient custom, claimed five shillings from any military man wearing his spurs during divine service. An officer who had innocently come to church in his spurs was noticed by some of the choristers, who much to his surprise demanded the fine as he was about to quit the castle. The money has been claimed several times during the last few years, and has generally been paid after a little demur by most of the victims, while others have indignantly resented the levy.

References to this custom, chiefly in cathedrals, are by no means uncommon in books relating to bygone days, and in the disbursements of the king's household it is named. In the privy purse expenses of Henry VII. is an entry :—

“ 1495.—To the children for the king's spurs - 4s.”

In the next monarch's reign, Henry VIII.,

between June, 1530, and September, 1532, no fewer than three payments amounting to 6s. 8d. each were made "to the Coristars of Wyndesor in rewarde for the king's spures."

At St. Paul's the choristers were in the olden time on the alert in looking after spur-money, and visitors to the building in spurs were not permitted to leave without paying the usual penalty. In "The Gull's Horne-booke" by Dekker (London, 1609), are directions how the gallant is to conduct himself. At St. Paul's he is told as follows: "Be sure your silver spurs clog your heels, and then the boys will swarm about you like so many white butterflies; when you in open quire shall draw forth a perfumed embroidered purse—the glorious sight of which will entice many countrymen from their devotion to wondering, and quoit silver into the boy's hands that it may be heard above the first lesson, although it be read in a voice as big as one of the great organs." Several other allusions to this custom at St. Paul's we have found in literature of the past.

We have traces of the usage at Westminster. It is recorded that when the Duke of Cumberland, afterwards the King of Hanover, appeared at the

Abbey in spurs, an attempt was made to enforce the usual penalty, but he declined to pay, saying that he was entitled to wear spurs at the place where he had been invested with them.

A curious fine-saving clause appears in a notice as follows, issued by the Dean of the Chapel Royal in 1622 :—

“If any knight or other person entitled to wear spurs, enter this chapel in that guise, he shall pay to the quiresters the accustomed fine; but if he command the youngest quirister to repeat his gamut, and he fail in the so doing, the said knight or other shall not pay the fine.”

The Duke of Wellington escaped a fine through the youngest boy failing to correctly render his gamut when requested by his grace.

A notice of the custom occurs in Ray's "Second Itinerary," under date of July 26th, 1661. "We began our journey," says Ray, "northwards from Cambridge, and that day, passing through Huntingdon and Stilton, we rode as far as Peterborough, twenty-five miles. There I first heard the cathedral service. The choristers made us pay money for coming into the quire with our spurs on."

There are many references to spur-money in the old laws of the belfry, which used to be general in ringing-rooms in bygone times. In

the Hathersage, Derbyshire, rules which go back to 1660, after giving directions for the ringers to have convenient room, a verse says :—

“Next if you do here intend to ring,
With hat or spur, do not touch a string ;
For if you do, you forfeit is for that,
Just four pence down to pay, or lose your hat.”

The Tong, Salop, orders bear the year 1694 on the notice board, and contain the following couplet :

“If you ring with spur or hat
A jugg of beer you pay for that.”

At All Saints', Hastings, the rules are in rhyme, and belong to the year 1756, and in two of the verses we are told :—

“There is no musick play'd or sung,
Like unto bells when they're well rung.
Then ring your bells well, if you can,
Silence is best for every man.
But if you ring in spur or hat
Sixpence you pay, be sure of that,
And if a bell you overthrow,
Pray pay a groat before you go.”

In the old rules of Holy Trinity Church, Hull, bearing date of May 1st, 1730, the first regulation relates to spurs, as follows :—“It is ordered, that every person who shall ring any bell with hat or spurs on, shall forfeit and pay sixpence for the use of the ringers.”

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Sluggard Wakers.

THE long and wearisome sermons of the olden time preachers were not calculated to keep people awake, and in many places persons were employed to prevent sleeping during the time of public worship. The sluggard wakers were paid a regular salary, and numerous references relating to them occur in churchwardens' accounts and other documents. Hogarth, in his "Sleeping Congregation," gives a graphic picture of a parson preaching, and nearly all save the clerk slumbering. He is contemplating the charms of a maiden who has fallen asleep while studying the service of matrimony. Both clergyman and clerk wear wigs, and on the pulpit is an hour-glass, used by the preacher of the past for measuring the length of his sermons.

Instances are not wanting of bequests being made to ensure the paying of persons to perform the duties of sluggard wakers. At Claverley, in Shropshire, Richard Dovey, in 1659, left certain property, situated near the church, on condition that eight shillings be paid annually to a poor man



THE SLEEPING CONGREGATION.

By William Hogarth.

to awake sleepers in the church and drive out dogs. John Rudge gave, by will dated 17th April, 1725, a pound yearly to be paid quarterly for a man in needy circumstances to go about Trysull Church during the delivery of the sermon to keep folk awake and drive from the church stray dogs.*

On July 1st, 1754, a resolution was passed at Sutton-on-the-Hill, Derbyshire, and duly recorded in the church books as follows :—" Samuel Lygoe shall have five shillings a year for the whipping of the dogs out of the church on Sundays and other days on which there is divine service, also he is to prevent anyone sleeping in the church by waking them with a white wand." At Castleton, Derbyshire, a disbursement is recorded in the churchwardens' accounts :—

" 1722. Paid to the sluggard waker - - - 10s."

At Kirkby Wharfe, Yorkshire, we have traces of this official. In the churchwardens' accounts is an entry :—

" 1711. Paid to Thomas Pawson for awaking those
who sleep in church and whipping dogs
out of it - - - - - 2s."

* Edwards's " Old English Customs," 1842.

In the churchwardens' accounts of Barton-on-Humber, Lincolnshire, the following appears :—

“ 1740. Paid Brocklebank for waking sleepers - 2s.”

At Prestwich, Lancashire, in 1736, it was agreed to pay a salary of thirteen shillings per annum for performing the following duties :—
“ Waking sleepers, whipping out dogs, keeping the children quiet, and the pulpit and church-walks clean.” A new coat was also to be provided for him every other year.

The Warrington sluggard waker was known as the “ bobber,” and at the commencement of the present century, at Holy Trinity Church, the duties were entrusted to a masculine woman called Betty Finch. She is said to have walked majestically along the aisles during the service, carrying in her hand a long wand like a fishing-rod with a “ bob ” at the end of it. When she caught anyone sleeping or speaking, she operated upon the offender with her “ bob.” Her son was engaged in the belfry, and used to sing :—

“ My father's a clerk,
My sister's a singer,
My mother's the bobber,
And I am a ringer.”

In 1833 Peter Barton resigned his position of

parish clerk of Aughton, near Ormskirk. Some strange stories are told respecting him. The following respecting sleeping in church is said to be true. He was by no means a temperate man, and would frequently take too much drink before going to church. Under the drowsy influence of his potations he would lose the thread of his proper responses. On one occasion, while the rector, the Rev. George Vanburgh, was reading the prayers, Peter, instead of giving utterance to as musical an "Amen" as he could muster, remained sleepily silent; the rector shaking him by the ear, Peter, awakened, called out "Good Lord, deliver us." *

At Acton, in Cheshire, it was customary, we are told, for a warden or other officer of the church to perambulate the church during divine service bearing a long wand, and if any of the congregation were caught napping, they were awakened by a tap on the head with the official staff.

In the earlier years of the present century, the sluggard waker at Dunchurch appears to have been most zealous in the performance of his duties. A visitor to the church placed on record an interesting account of his operations. He

* Newstead's "Gleanings towards the Annals of Aughton," 1893.

says that he was a respectable looking man, having much the air of a churchwarden, and carried a long, stout wand, with a fork at the end of it. "At intervals," he relates, "he stepped stealthily up and down the nave and aisles of the church, and whenever he saw an individual whose senses were buried in oblivion, he touched him with his wand so effectually that the spell was broken, and in an instant he was recalled to all the realities of life. I watched as he mounted, with easy steps, into the galleries. At the end of one of them there sat in the first seat a young man who had very much the appearance of a farmer, with his mouth open, and his eyes closed, a perfect picture of repose. The official marked him for his own, and having fitted his fork to the nape of his neck, he gave him a push, that, had he not been used to such visitations, it would probably have produced an ejaculatory start, highly inconvenient on such occasions. But no, everyone seemed to quietly acquiesce in the usage, and whatever else they might be dreaming of, they certainly did not dream of the infringement upon the liberties of the subject, nor did they think of applying for a summons on account of an assault."

In another church, we are told, it was the practice of the beadle to walk quietly round the sacred edifice, carrying in his hand a long staff; at one end was a fox's brush and at the other a knob. If he caught a lady asleep he gently tickled her face with the brush, but if a man was found napping a sensible rap with the knob end was bestowed upon him.

Women in Scotland appear to have been guilty of sleeping in the kirk; this they could do without being observed, when wearing plaids about their heads. During the seventeenth century the Church Courts passed not a few rules respecting plaid wearing. At Glasgow, in 1621, the Kirk Session enacted that "no woman, married or unmarried, come within the kirk doors, to preaching or prayers, with their plaids about their heads, neither lie down in the kirk on their face in tyme of prayer, with certification that their plaids shall be drawn up, and themselves raisit to the beddall."

On March 4th, 1645, the Kirk Session of Kinghorn denounced, "the uncomliness of women coming to church on the Sabbath to sermon with plaids about their heads . . . which provocks sleeping in time of sermone

without being exposed." It was ordered by the Kirk Session "That if anie woman be found in church on the Sabbath with a plaid over or about her head from this day forth, she shall conforme to that act, pay 6sh. toties quoties, and further, be liable to such censure as the session shall condescend upon to be inflicted for her contemptioun and disobedience." On March 17th, 1643, the Kirk Session of Monifeith provided their church officer, Robert Scott, "with one pynt of tar, to put upon the women that held plaids about their heads."*

At Ayr the apprentices sat in the Trades Gallery of the Parish Church, and a man employed by the incorporated trades of the town kept a long stick which he used for keeping the apprentices awake.

The sluggard waker was known in New England as the tithingman; Mrs. Alice Morse Earle describes the Colonial sleep-banisher as an absurd type of the English beadle. She tells us that he was equipped with a long staff, heavily knobbed at one end, with which he severely and pitilessly rapped the heads of the too sleepy men and the too wide-awake boys. From the other

* Rogers's "Social Life in Scotland," 1884.

end of this wand depended a long fox tail, or an hare's foot, which he softly thrust in the faces of the sleepy females.

At Lynn, Roger Scott struck the tithingman who had roughly and suddenly awakened him. For his offence Scott was whipped as a warning to keep awake and not to strike back at a "public exercise." Mrs. Earle tells us that at many rigidly severe towns, as in Portsmouth in 1662, and in Boston in 1667, it was ordered by the select men as a proper means of punishment that "a cage be made or some other means invented for such as sleepe on the Lord's Daie." Perhaps they awoke the offender up, and rudely and summarily dragged him out and caged him at once, and kept him thus prisoned throughout the nooning—a veritable jail bird.*

At Newbury on one occasion an eccentric preacher awoke a sleeper in a novel manner. He observed a man sleeping called Mark, and made use of the Biblical words: "I say unto you, mark the perfect man and behold the upright." But, says Mrs. Earle, in the midst of his low, monotonous sermon voice, he roared out the word "mark" in a loud shout that brought the

* Mrs. Alice Morse Earle's "The Sabbath in Puritan New England," 1891.

dozing Mark to his feet, bewildered, but wide awake.

We are told by Mrs. Earle that Mr. Moody, of York, Maine, employed a similar device to awaken and mortify sleepers in meeting. He shouted "Fire, fire, fire!" and when the startled men jumped up, calling out "Where?" he roared back in turn, "In hell, for sleeping sinners."

A preacher at Brunswick, Maine, called out by name to one of his sleeping congregation, much to the annoyance of the man, who was a person of some standing in the place. "Mind your own business," said the sleepful one, "and go on with your sermon."

During a visit to a church in Sarna, Du Chaillu saw in the pulpit "near the Bible what resembled a policeman's club, at the end of which was a thick piece of leather, the whole reminding me of a martinet. This had been used, until within a few years, to awake the sleepers, the parson striking the pulpit with it forcibly, thus compelling attention. Near the pulpit was a long pole, rounded at one end, with which the sexton, it appears, used to poke the ribs of sleepers. These two implements, intended to keep the church awake, were used extensively in many out-of-the-

way places in Sweden twenty and thirty years ago, and here within a few years, but were discontinued by the present pastor. Now, pinches of strong snuff are often offered to the sleeper, who, after sneezing for a considerable time, finds his drowsiness entirely gone.”*

We have heard in Scotland of persons partaking of the pungent pinch for the purpose of banishing sleep in the kirk. Let us bring our chapter to a close by re-telling a good story. “You’re sleepy, John,” said a Scotch minister, pausing in the middle of a drowsy discourse and looking hard at the man he addressed. “Take some snuff, John.” “Put the snuff in the sermon,” ejaculated John; and the faces of the audience showed that the retort was fully appreciated.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

* Du Chaillu’s “Land of the Midnight Sun,” 1881.

Keeping Order in Church.

THE conduct in church of children, and even persons of mature years, in bygone times appears not to have been exemplary, judging from the entries in churchwardens' accounts for money spent on officials for keeping order.

According to an old benefaction table in the parish church of Wolverhampton, amongst other bequests made by Richard Brooke, was five shillings a year to be given to a poor man to keep boys quiet in the church and churchyard at the time of prayer and sermon.

The accounts of Spilsby Church include several sums spent for keeping boys quiet on Sundays. The following are examples :—

- “ 1790. Pd. G. Kilk for helping the Boys from
 playing on a Sunday - - - - - 0 6.
 1795. Pd. W. Humstance 20 Weeks in The
 last year, and 5 Weeks since Easter to prevent
 Boys from Play on Sundays in Church Time 12 6.”

Three years later we find a rather strange charge :—

- “ 1798. 25th June Pd. a man for atending in
 preventing Horses being tied to Church fence 1 0.”

At East Budleigh, Devonshire, an official was engaged to keep in order the unruly boys sitting in the gallery. The following are examples of payments made for services rendered :—

“ 1795. John Saunders for looking after the Boys									
in the Gallery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	0.
1797. John Saunders for two years Sexton in									
the Gallery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	0.”

We find from the churchwardens' accounts of South Cave that even in this quiet village, a man was engaged to keep order in the gallery. The following payment was made :—

“ 1807. Paid John Arnel for keeping silence									
in the Loft	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	2 6.”

Similar entries to the foregoing find a place in numerous churchwardens' accounts which have come under our notice. Happily in these latter days an official for keeping order is no longer needed.

In the earlier years of the nineteenth century at Royston, the master of the Sunday School used to keep the restless children in order in the church with a ten-foot wand. It is said that he usually missed the head of a boy and hit the seat on which he sat. We are not surprised to learn that the children were restless, for what with attendance at school and church

many hours were spent. In the vestry minute book it is stated: "The masters to receive the scholars at 9 o'clock in the morning and go to church at 11. The scholars are to return to school at 2 and go to church at 3, and return from church to school, and continue there till between five and six o'clock."

Attempts were made at Royston for a proper observance of the Lord's Day, and it was resolved at a meeting, held 31st October, 1787, of a committee who practically governed the town:—

"No person without reasonable excuse shall be absent from some place of Divine Worship on a Sunday—1s. to the poor.

The Constables to go about the town, and particularly the Cross, to see that this is complied with, and if they find any number of people assembled together, to take down their names and return these to the Committee that they may be prosecuted.

No inn-keeper or alehouse-keeper shall suffer anyone to continue drinking or tippling in his house—Forfeit 10s., and disabled for 3 years.

Ordered that the Constable go to the public-houses to see that no tippling or drinking is done during Divine Service—and to prevent drunkenness, any time of the day."

Several other orders were passed relating to the closing of shops and preventing travelling on a Sunday.

At a retired Holderness village not many miles from Hull, about twenty years ago, a local preacher occupied the pulpit at a Wesleyan chapel, and was not a little annoyed at the restlessness of the boys belonging to the Sunday School. He at last paused and corrected one of the lads ; this irritated the teacher, who addressed the preacher, requesting him to attend to his sermon, adding that he would see after the conduct of his class.

We find in America officers appointed for keeping the children quiet in church. In the columns of the *Outlook*, an American periodical for November 25th, 1893, Mr. Clifton Johnson gives an interesting account of "The Old-Time New England Sabbath." It deals with Norwich, Massachusetts, at the commencement of the nineteenth century. The children were in four pews in the gallery. With the boys we are told sat the tithingman, and it was his duty to keep them in order. "He bore the mark of his office," says Mr. Johnson, "a long rod with a worsted tassel on the end, and if his eye detected any uneasiness among the youngsters, he tapped the floor with his rod and pointed it in warning at the offenders. Again, he might rise and reach over

to the disorderly ones, and prod them with his long rod. If a girl misbehaved, he would walk with creaking footsteps, in the awful hush of the church, clear around the gallery, and bring her back with him to the boys' side. This did not happen often, for it was felt to be a great disgrace for a girl to be thus punished." The services appear to have been long and dull, and trying to both young and old.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Outrageous Conduct in Church.

WE get some glimpses of the wild life of the West Riding of Yorkshire in former times in the biographies of the Brontës. On the death, in 1819, of the Rev. James Charnock, vicar of Haworth, the living was offered to the Rev. Patrick Brontë by the Vicar of Bradford, who had the right of presentation. An objection was raised to Mr. Brontë by certain trustees of the church estate, who felt that they should have a voice in the selection. Mr. Brontë at once declined to create strife, and refused the offer. The Vicar of Bradford then gave the living to the Rev. Mr. Redhead, greatly to the annoyance of the trustees, who showed their displeasure in a strange manner. On the first Sunday Mr. Redhead officiated at Haworth, the church was filled, many of those present standing in the aisles, most of them wearing the wooden clogs of the district. While Mr. Redhead was reading the second lesson a strange scene was enacted. The whole of the congregation quitted the pews and the aisles, and, as if by a preconcerted

arrangement, left the church, the clattering of their clogs, which they made no effort to lessen, rendering it impossible to proceed with the service. In a few minutes the minister and the clerk were the sole occupants of the sacred edifice.

This was a bad beginning, but the proceedings on the following Sunday were far worse. The church was again well filled, but the aisles were on this occasion left clear, evidently by way of preparation for the disgraceful scene presently to be enacted. At about the same period of the service as the interruption of the previous Sunday, a half-witted fellow, mounted upon an ass with his face towards the animal's tail, rode into the church, and began to urge it through the aisles. On his head he wore as many old hats, one upon another, as he could carry without the risk of their toppling over, and his grotesque appearance and comical position at once caused a tittering among the congregation, which soon became boisterous laughter. The minister's voice was drowned by the unseemly merriment, and he found himself unable to continue the service.

Worse was to follow. On the third Sunday Mr. Redhead rode up the village, accompanied

by several mounted gentlemen from Bradford, and this evidence of his determination not to be deterred from the performance of his duty by ribaldry and noise, seems to have prompted his opponents to more violent action. On the minister and his friends stabling their horses at the Black Bull, and proceeding to the church, a chimney sweeper, who had been engaged that morning in sweeping the chimneys of some out-buildings in the village, and was in a very drunken condition, was induced to enter the church with a disorderly body of those who had taken part in the disturbances of the previous two Sundays, and place himself directly in front of the lectern, where he nodded a solemn assent to everything said by the minister.

The service had not proceeded far when this passive annoyance became too tame for those upon whose prompting the sweep was acting. He left his seat, stumbled up the steps of the pulpit, and attempted to embrace Mr. Redhead, a proceeding which produced roars of laughter from the disorderly portion of the congregation. On the minister attempting to escape, some of the more violent of the disturbers pushed the sweep against him, blackening his surplice with soot. He succeeded in reaching the churchyard, where they

again assailed him, and threw him and the sweep on the ground, where the soot-bag had been emptied. With some difficulty he extricated himself from the filthy contact, and escaped into the Black Bull, the doors of which were immediately barred, the rioters yelling without, and threatening to stone him and his friends. They succeeded, however, in leaving by the back way, and soon left the village far behind them.

Mr. Redhead felt compelled to resign the charge, his ministrations being so unwelcome. But the real grievance was not to him personally, but with the action of the Vicar of Bradford in giving him the living, in which matter the trustees felt they had a right to be consulted. On this being conceded to them, they selected Mr. Brontë, who had won their esteem by his refusal to accept the living, in the first instance, when he found that they were unwilling to receive him. Local authorities have testified the correctness of the statements of Mrs. Gaskell concerning these disgraceful proceedings, and the transactions which led to them.

Although a sense of decency was sadly deficient among the majority of the inhabitants of the West Riding at this period, they kept watch on

the clergy, and were ever ready to make known to the world their presumed as well as their real offences and failings. The mistakes of some of them are well illustrated in an anecdote related by Mr. Abraham Holroyd, a well-known collector of local lore. When Mr. Brontë resided at Thornton, in Bradford Dale, it was rumoured in the village that he had been seen, by a Dissenter, through a chamber window, shaving himself on a Sunday morning, which was regarded as a very serious disregard of the obligation of Sabbath observance on the part of a clergyman. Mrs. Ackroyd, a lady residing in the parish, had an interview with Mr. Brontë on the subject. On his hearing what she had to say, he observed: "I should like you to keep what I say in your family; but I never shaved myself in all my life, or was ever shaved by anyone else. I have so little beard that a little clipping every three months is all that is necessary."

Troublesome Quakers.

IN the seventeenth century the Quakers gave much trouble to the clergy and churchwardens, and their conduct can only be regarded as a religious scandal. A favourite practice of the Quakers was to enter a church during the time of public worship, and annoy the preacher with such telling epithets as a "liar," a "priest of Baal," a "Babylonish merchant selling beastly ware," etc. George Fox, in 1649, visited Nottingham, and repaired to a church, and in course of the sermon he interrupted the minister, and for the offence was put into prison ; but the next day he was set at liberty, and proceeded to the market-place, and preached to the people.

He then went to Mansfield Woodhouse, and going to the church, found a few folk in the vestry. He addressed them in his usual style, but they would not listen to him, and commenced beating him with their hands, bibles, and sticks ; he was put into the stocks, and finally at nightfall stoned out of the village.

At Helmsley in Yorkshire, on the 29th April,

1665, the vicar, Thomas Slinger, was preparing to conduct the last rites of the dead over the remains of a parishioner, when five excited Quakers, without the least explanation, rushed at him, tearing his surplice and book. They were brought up for this assault and punished.

Sometimes the Quakers met more than their match, and this is well illustrated by an anecdote.

On a certain occasion at Orton, in Westmoreland, the then vicar, Mr. Fothergill, had on a particular Sunday exchanged pulpits with Mr. Dalton of Shap, who happened to be possessed of but one eye. However, a Quaker, presumably hatted, stalked into Orton Church during the sermon, and, in a loud voice, called out to the preacher :

“Come down, thou false Fothergill!”

“Who told thee,” asked the minister, “that my name was Fothergill?”

“The Spirit,” quoth the other.

“Then, that Spirit of thine is a lying Spirit,” exclaimed the minister conclusively, “for it is well known that I am not Fothergill, but *peed* Dalton of Shap!”*

The Quakers took a firm stand against paying

* Leyland's “Yorkshire Coast,” 1892.

church rates, and churchwardens' accounts contain entries bearing on this matter. At Wellington, Somerset, we find it stated :—

“ 1728, paid for a Warrant for ye Quakers that
refus'd to pay their rates - - - - 1s. od.”

Many entries similar to the foregoing might be reproduced. Happily for all we live in an age that is no longer disturbed with strife, and when all sections of the people are ready to support the good work of the Church.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

The Dog-Whipper.

THE dog-whipper in the days of old was a useful, if not an exalted, functionary in the Church. Many quaint items relating to him appear in old churchwardens' accounts of both town and country. In several places the implements employed for removing animals from the sanctuary still remain, more especially in Wales. Dogs in the olden time were far more plentiful than they are at present; the introduction of a tax upon them in 1796 was largely the means of their diminution. It is not easy to ascertain when the dog nuisance was first felt in the church, but we know that Archbishop Laud directed that altars should be surrounded with paling, with staves so near each other as to make it impossible for dogs to get near the altar. It is recorded in the "Life of Archbishop Laud":—"In one place, we are told, a dog had run away with the bread set apart for the Holy Communion." The Rev. Elias Owen, F.S.A., states that in the old churches in Wales the altars are protected in the way

suggested by the Archbishop, and that the workmanship belongs to his time.*

Archbishop Holgate, of York, in one of his Injunctions of 1552, ordered that "the vergers do attend choir in divine service for the expulsion of beggars, other light persons, and dogs forth of the church."

The earliest entry in the churchwardens' accounts which has come under our notice is from Ludlow, and is as follows :—

"1543. Item, payde his sonne (Thomas Payver) for whipping dogs out of the churche - viiid."

According to Thomas Wright, F.S.A., the editor of a volume of the Ludlow churchwardens' accounts, the title of dog-whipper in the sixteenth century was given to the monk who had charge of the church in some of the Continental monasteries.

Another early reference to this office is in the records of the church of St. Mary Woolnoth, London. In the churchwardens' accounts it is stated :—

"1564-5. Itme payde for a whip to beate doggs oute of the churche - - - - id."

It will not be without interest to reproduce from a few old churchwardens' accounts entries bearing

* *The Reliquary*, 1897.

on this subject. The following are from the parish church of Wakefield, now the cathedral :—

“ 1616. Paide to Craystork for whipping ye			
doggs	-	-	o 5 o
1624. Paid to the dog-whipper	-	-	o 2 o
1625-1628. Paid to Lyght Owler for			
whipping dogs	-	-	o 1 4
1664. Dog-whipper for his quarter wages	-	-	o 4 o
1703. For hatts, shoes, and hoses for			
sexton and dog-whipper	-	-	o 18 6.”

These officers were clothed down to 1820, and there are payments on this account throughout. Says Mr. W. S. Banks, dog-whipper is the designation by which the vergers were called for a century or more. The name has come down to our time in the form of “Dog-nowper.” “Nawpin” is striking on the head.*

In the neighbouring town of Barnsley, it is recorded in the churchwardens’ accounts :—

“ 1647. To Richard Hodgson’s wife for			
whipping dogs	-	-	00.02.00.”

At South Cave, East Yorkshire, the accounts contain items bearing on this officer, and an entry is as follows :—

“ 1765. Paid Robt. Marshall for whipping ye Doogs o 5 o.”

We find in Lancashire many traces of the dog-

* Banks’s “Walks in Yorkshire, Wakefield, and its Neighbourhood,” 1871.

whipper. In the Burnley parish accounts a charge is made :—

“ 1728-9, April 29. For whipping dogs - - - 0 4 0.”

From a record in the parish books of Goosnargh, near Preston, that the sexton had to whip dogs out of the church every Lord's Day, in addition to his other duties.

Various items relating to this subject are included in the Ribchester churchwardens' accounts ; one entry says :—

“ 1734-5—A Whip for ye dogg's - - - 00 00 06.”

The next items are from the churchwardens' accounts of Colne :—

“ 1713. Paid for a dog-whip to whip ye dogs
out of ye church - - - - - 00 00 04
1753. Dog-whipper - - - - - 0 0 6.”

In the parish accounts of Aughton, near Ormskirk, are numerous entries on the dog-whipper. It is stated :—

“ 1752. Spent on Singers and the dog-
whipper - - - - - 0 2 2
Pd for a whip - - - - - 0 0 2½.”

Several items, says Mr. G. C. Newstead, occur in the accounts relative to the dog-whipper, showing that this functionary was a person of

official importance, drawing a yearly salary of 10s. ; for, in 1758 and consecutive years, the entry appears :—

“ Pd the Dog Whipper - - - - - 10s.” *

The following and similar entries occur in the churchwardens’ accounts of Ulverston :—

“ 1724. Paid Henry Leathom for a whip - 0 1 0
 1726 to widdow Sandys the years sallery for
 whipping - - - - - 0 5 0.”

It will be observed at this period a woman performed the duties of dog-whipper.

“ 1728 paid for mending ye Dog whipp - 0 0 2
 1758 to John Holme for one year whipping
 dogs out of church - - - - - 0 10 0.”

We extract from the churchwardens’ accounts of Over, Cheshire, a charge as follows :—

“ 1766. Paid Thomas Smith for whiping dogs
 out of Church - - - - - 0 5 0.”

Lincolnshire supplies several items of interest, and in the churchwardens’ accounts of Louth for 1550, the following entry occurs :—

“ It pd to the belman for bettyng ye dogges owte
 of ye churche - - - - - ijd.”

Mr. R. W. Goulden, the compiler of “ Louth

* “ Gleanings towards the Annals of Aughton,” 1893.

Old Corporation Records," writing to us in 1899, says such entries are very common in these and similar accounts. I have had the privilege of talking with an ancient gentleman of this town (now more than ninety years of age), who has seen a dog-whipper discharging his duty in Louth Church. At Croft is an entry in the old accounts for the year 1718 :—

"For dogs whipping - - - - - 00 07 06."

In the churchwardens' account of Kirton-in-Lindsey a payment is recorded :—

"1817. For dog whipping - - - - - 0 6 8."

At Northorpe Church in this county a pew was set apart for the accommodation of the dogs from the hall. We are not aware of similar provision in any other places, but it is possible such pews may have been provided.

The parish records of Derbyshire yield some interesting information on this theme. In the churchwardens' books of South Wingfield, near Alfreton, is an entry :—

"Accounts of Robert Smith, churchwarden of ye
hamlet Oakerthorpe, for ye year of 1728,
September 28. Paid to dog whipper for his
wages - - - - - 1 8."

The next two items are from Youldgreave :—

- “ 1609. To Robt. Walton for whipping ye dogge
 forth of ye church in time of divyne service 1 8
 1617. Robert Benbowe for whipping out of ye
 dogges - - - - - 2 0.”

At Worksop, in the adjoining county of Nottingham, are entries in the churchwardens' accounts as follows :—

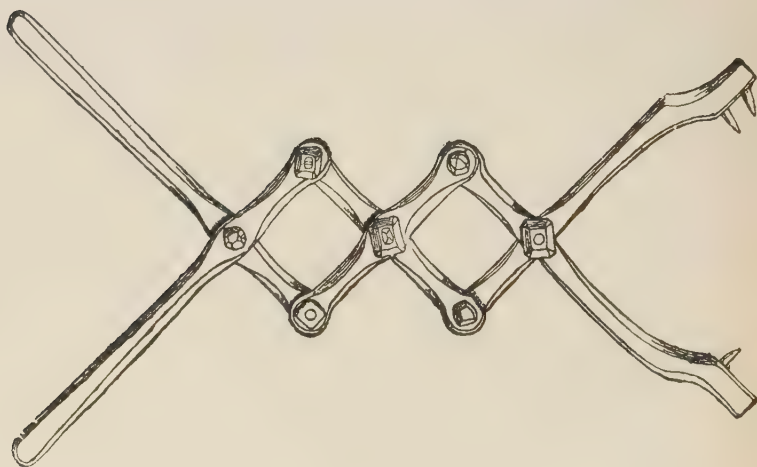
- “ 1597. Paid Old Verde, for whipping of dogs 9
 1616. For whipping dogges out of ye church
 one whole year - - - - - 12.”

The next is an item from the accounts of Forest Hill, Oxford :—

- “ 1694. Pd to Tho Mills, for whipping dogs out
 of Church - - - - - 1s.”

At Chislet, Kent, is a piece of land known as “Dogwhippers' Marsh,” from which a payment of ten shillings a year was to be devoted to keeping order in the church and dogs during the time of public worship. It is stated by Edwards, in his “Remarkable Charities,” that from time immemorial an acre of land in the parish of Peterchurch, Herefordshire, has been appropriated to the use of a person for keeping dogs out of the church, such person being appointed by the minister and churchwardens.

We will next notice some of the implements employed in removing dogs from churches. At Baslow Church, an ancient chapel of Bakewell, is a weapon consisting of the thong of a whip about three feet along, and it is fastened to a long ash stick, and round it is twisted a band of leather. In Wales, and also in various parts of England,



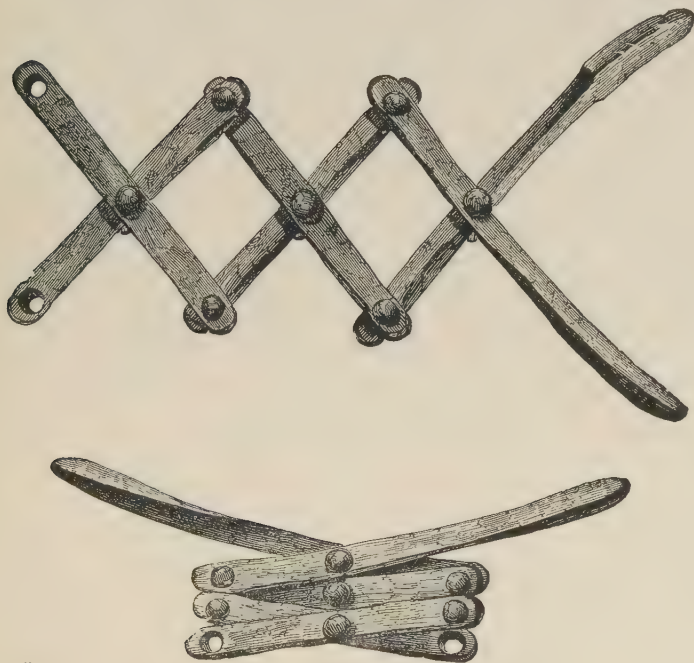
WOODEN DOG TONGS AT BANGOR CATHEDRAL.

in past times dog tongs were largely used. A glass case in the cathedral at Bangor contains the old dog tongs, which were lost for some time, but were eventually brought back, as will be gathered from a notice placed near them, which is as follows :—

“Restored to Bangor
Cathedral by W. P. Mathews,
per J. E. Griffith, Vronheulog,
Upper Bangor.

Nov. 22/92 [*i.e.*, 1892].”

These tongs are made of oak, and fastened



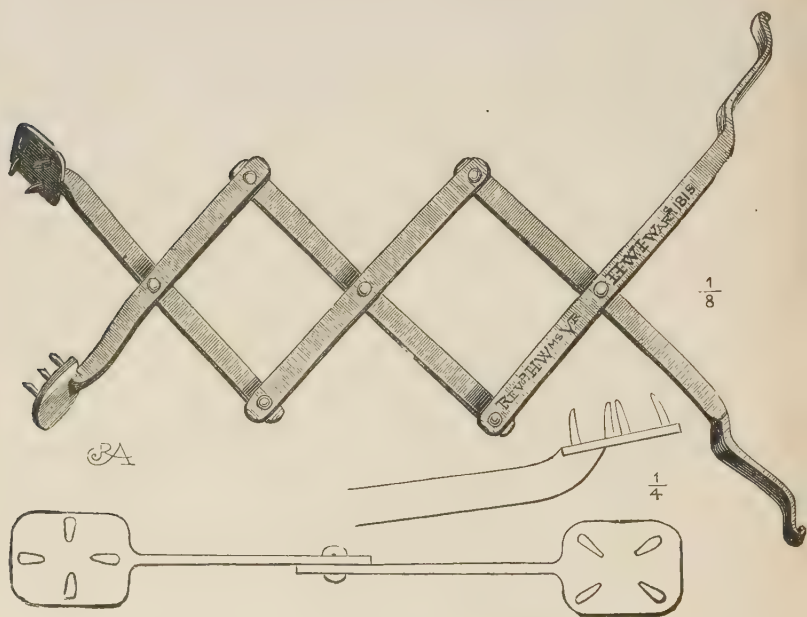
W.A.B. DEL. &c.

WOODEN DOG TONGS AT CLODOCK, HEREFORDSHIRE.

together with wooden pegs, with one exception, which is of iron, and it has been suggested that it is in place of one of the worn out wooden pegs. When stretched out to the fullest extent the tongs measure about three feet, the teeth are formidable,

and longer than others usually found in these implements.

We give a picture of the dog tongs still remaining at Clodock, Herefordshire. The illustration shows them extended and closed; they are of the usual type found in England and Wales.



IRON DOG TONGS AT CLYNNOG FAWR.

Many places in Wales might be mentioned where the dog tongs are preserved, or the officer noticed in old parish records; the chief are given by the Rev. Elias Owen, M.A., F.S.A., in a paper on "Obsolete Welsh Church Customs." It will

be sufficient for our purpose to present a picture with details of the tongs at St. Bueno's Church, Clynnog Fawr, Carnarvonshire. Mr. Owen carefully examined these tongs, and tells us the forceps terminate like the jaws of a pair of flat pincers. There are four spikes in each about an inch long. They are not placed alike in both, so that when brought together the poor dog was gripped by eight spikes. It must have been a cruel grip. The handles, too, are projecting, and somewhat thin, to give the holder a firmer grasp. The handles are inscribed "Clynnog," and on the other side "Rev. H. Wms, Vr. ; J. J., W. J., Wars, 1813." These are the initials of the then vicar, Rev. Hugh Williams, and J. Jones and W. Jones, churchwardens. The Rev. J. Pryse, the present vicar, informed Mr. Owen that the inscription is supposed to refer to the repairing, and not to the making of the tongs. In any case the date indicates that the tongs were used for some years in the present century.

We must here express our thanks to the President and Council of the Cambrian Archæological Association for kindly placing at our disposal the three illustrations used in this paper.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Churchwardens Checking Convivial Customs.

FROM a remote period down to the days when rural police were introduced, churchwardens attempted to check drinking in public-houses on a Sunday during the time of divine service. It was customary for the wardens and other officials to remain in church until the commencement of the second lesson, and then leave and visit the various public-houses in the parish. If anyone was caught tipping in a tavern or met in the street in a state of intoxication, he was without delay fastened in the stocks, which were usually erected near the parish church.

The rich as well as the poor have been placed in the stocks, and perhaps the most notable victim to suffer in them was Cardinal Wolsey. About 1500 he was the vicar of Lymington, near Yeovil, and at the village feast was inebriated, and his condition coming under the notice of a strict moralist and magistrate, Sir Amias Poulett, he directed that the vicar be punished in the stocks, and the future Cardinal was thus degraded in the

sight of his parishioners. If those in high places were punished for overstepping the bounds of moderation, we can readily understand that the poor would fall an easy prey to those in power.

The history of the stocks may be traced back to distant times, and their origin is lost in the mists of antiquity, and they have been chiefly used in England for punishing drunkards. •

The magistrates, at the instigation of the churchwardens, in later times ordered offenders to be placed in the stocks, but in earlier ages the churchwardens administered the law without the aid of the justices of peace. The latest instance of the stocks being used was at Newbury, on June 11th, 1872, when one Mark Tuck, having given much trouble by his intemperate habits, and imprisonment not having a sobering effect, other measures had to be tried, and so he was put in the stocks for drunkenness and disorderly conduct in the parish church. He had to pass four hours in the stocks, which had not been used for twenty-six years. Tuck appears to have keenly felt his position, and was by no means pleased at the large number of people who came to see him in his novel situation. He left the stocks a sadder, and it is to be hoped a wiser, man.

Sunday gamblers were sometimes punished in the stocks, and in a Yorkshire newspaper of April 14th, 1860, a case is reported. "A notorious character," it is recorded, "named John Gambles, of Stanningley, who, having been convicted some months ago for Sunday gambling, and sentenced to sit in the stocks for six hours, left the locality, returned lately, and suffered his punishment by sitting in the stocks from two till eight o'clock on Tuesday last." More than one writer on old-time punishments has regarded this as the last time the stocks were used ; this is, however, a mistake.

At Beverley, about 1853, the churchwardens, while on their rounds, met in the street a man named Brigham tipsy. He was taken into custody, and next day brought before the mayor, who admonished him on the sin of Sunday drinking, and finally he was condemned to the stocks for two hours. A good deal of sympathy was evoked for the sufferer, and when a constable attempted to place on Brigham's hat a paper stating the cause of the punishment and its extent, a man learned in the law stepped forward and tore it to pieces, saying that it was no part of the sentence to subject him to that additional disgrace, an act which gained the approbation of those

assembled. A working man filled and lit a pipe of tobacco and placed it in the mouth of the poor fellow, but a policeman at once removed the soothing pipe, no doubt thinking that tobacco would enable Brigham to bear with less suffering his punishment. The stocks are still preserved in St. Mary's Church, Beverley, and the year 1789 appears on them.

Beverley is not the only place where persons undergoing punishment have obtained the sympathy of the public. It is related by Mr. Morris in the "Transactions of the Shropshire Archæological and Natural History Society," "that some men [about sixty years ago] for imbibing too freely and speaking unseemly language to parishioners as they were going to Market Drayton Church on a Sunday morning, were, on the following day, duly charged with the offence, and fined, the alternative being confinement for four hours in the stocks. Two of the men refused to pay the fine, and were consequently put therein. The people flocked around the stocks, and, while some regaled them with an ample supply of beer, others expressed their sympathy in a more practical way by giving money, so that, when released, their heads and their pockets were

considerably heavier than they had been on the previous Sunday." We presume that the local authorities would not venture again to call the stocks into requisition.

At Sheffield, in 1790, we find it stated that nine men were placed in the stocks for drinking in a public-house during the time of Sunday service in the church.

Mr. W. H. Dawson, the historian of Skipton, has placed on record particulars of the practice in that town. The beadle headed the procession, and if a person was found drunk in the streets, or even drinking in one of the inns, he was promptly escorted to the stocks, and impounded for the remainder of the morning. The stocks were taken down about 1840, and Mr. Dawson says that during their later years were used almost solely on Sundays. The punishment was usually put in force at church time. Many are the allusions to the stocks in the old township account-books for repairs, etc., and similar entries to the following appear :—

"April, 16th, 1763—For taking up a man and
setting him in ye stocks - - - - 2s. od."

The genial, gossipy Samuel Pepys has an allusion to this subject in his "Diary." Writing on

April 12th, 1663, he says the parish of St. Olave's was supplied with a new pair of stocks "very handsome," and one Sunday a poor boy, who had been found in a drunken state by the constable, was led off "to handsel them." The history of London, as might readily be supposed, supplies many important facts respecting the use of the stocks in bygone days.

The Rev. William Grimshaw, B.A., was presented with the living of Haworth in 1742; he was a man of piety and power, was popular as a preacher, and a terror to evil-doers. He would put down rank vices with a horse-whip. Cowper's friend, the Rev. Jno. Newton, wrote Grimshaw's life, and it has often been reprinted. "It was his frequent and almost constant custom," we are told, "to leave the church while the psalm before the sermon was singing, to see if any were absent from worship, and idling their time in the church-yard, the street, or the ale-houses, and many of those whom he so found he would drive into the church before him. A friend of mine, passing a public-house in Haworth on a Lord's Day morning, saw several persons making their escape out of it, some jumping out of the lower windows and some over a low wall; he was at first

alarmed, fearing the house was on fire, but upon inquiring what was the cause of the commotion, he was told that they saw the parson coming. They were more afraid of their parson than of a justice of peace. His reproofs were so authoritative, and yet so mild and friendly, that the stoutest sinners could not stand before him."

It will not be out of place to show how in Scotland the preacher tried to prevent the profaning of the Sabbath. In North Britain Sabbath-breakers were severely punished. At Forfar, in 1720, we learn from the Rev. Dr. J. G. M'Pherson that a representation was made to the Kirk Sessions "that the scandals of drunkenness and Sabbath-breaking are too prevalent; some by carrying in their water and cutting their kail; others by shaving their faces and carrying home ale in stoups, etc." The church officials and the magistrates met, and it was decided to punish such unchristian vices. In 1723 a substitute occupied the pulpit, and the minister, in company with the elders, made search for the people that "might be drinking or profaning the day by idleness and found loose vagrants" in certain houses. Two years later the minister of Tannadice supplied the place of the minister at Forfar,

and enabled him, with his elders, to visit the public-houses, where men were found drinking, and for their offences dealt with at the Sessions. One man was dismissed with an exhortation, because, "being lame of a foot," he was waiting at the public-house for a horse to take him home, as well as his wife, who was at sermon.

Several cases are commented on by Dr. M'Pherson, and from him we learn that for repeated offences, especially of habit and repute, carrying water, sleeping at home, ale-drinking during sermon on Sabbath, the delinquents were ordered to be "nailed to the log" to the church door, or "put on the joughs" during the interval between the forenoon and afternoon services.*

At Congleton, Cheshire, on a Sunday in 1824, as the churchwardens were making their usual tour of inspection, they were met by a woman named Ann Runcorn, and she abused them with her tongue, calling them scoundrels, rogues, and using other equally objectionable terms. Finally she told them "it would look better of them if they would see after their own houses rather than after other folks' which were better than their own." She was apprehended for her

* Rev. J. G. M'Pherson's "Strathmore, Past and Present," 1885.

conduct, and next day brought before the Bench of magistrates. After the facts relating to her conduct had been stated, the mayor delivered the following sentence: "That it is the unanimous decision of the Mayor and Justices that the prisoner (Ann Runcorn) there and then have the town's bridle put upon her, and that she be led by the magistrate's clerk's clerk through every street in the town, as an example to all scolding women; and that the mayor and magistrates were much obliged to the churchwardens for bringing the case before them." The woman was led through the place wearing the bridle, followed by hundreds of the inhabitants. On her return to the Town Hall, the brank was removed in presence of the Mayor, magistrates, churchwardens, and a large gathering of town's folk.

The churchwardens sometimes took refreshments during their rounds. We have it on the authority of an eye-witness that the churchwardens at the North Country village of Heaversham usually came from an inn near the church wiping their mouths. On the 28th April, 1872, a policeman found the churchwardens and other officials of Kirkheaton parish church in the

Beaumont Arms Inn, Kirkheaton, during prohibited hours. The landlord and his visitors were summoned before the county magistrates, and it was stated that from time immemorial it had been customary to visit the public-house, and remain there until the church "loosed." On the day in question one of the defendants said, "We are fairly caught, we might as well have another glass." He called for one and paid for it in presence of the police officer. The men were found guilty of breaking the law, but the case was not pressed, and it was agreed that the payment of costs would meet the ends of justice.

We do not hear anything more after the foregoing case of any attempts being made by churchwardens to check convivial customs. It was left to the police to prevent public-houses being opened during prohibited hours.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Parson=Publicans.

IN past ages Church-Ales were popular social meetings, held as a means of making money for the use of the sanctuary and for providing for the poor. The Puritans waged war against these feasts, and it is quite clear that this was not done without reasonable cause, for the gatherings were not free from abuses of a serious nature. The magistrates made attempts to stop Church-Ales, but were not usually successful. In Devonshire, for example, the justices of peace made an order in 1607 declaring that church-ales, parish-ales, clerk's-ales, sexton's-ales were to be utterly suppressed. This order had little if any effect; in 1622 the merry-makings were still continued, and further attempts were made to prevent them.*

It is evident from injunctions issued by the bishops, and other old-time documents issued in connection with the Church, that the clergy in many instances sold ale, and employed the profits for their own private purposes. Bishop Grindal

* Hamilton's "Quarter Sessions from Elizabeth to Queen Anne," London, 1878.

in his Injunctions at York for the clergy, issued in 1571-2, has an important order bearing on this theme. It is as follows: "Ye shall not keep, or suffer to be kept in your parsonage or vicarage houses, any ale-houses, tippling-houses, or taverns, nor shall sell ale, beer or wine."

In the same year Bishop Grindal directed that "The Churchwardens shall not suffer any pedlar or others whatsoever, to set out any wares to sale, either in the porches of churches or in churchyards, nor anywhere else on holy days or Sundays, while any part of divine service is doing, or while any sermon is preaching." Bearing on church and churchyard trading, Bishop Hooper, in 1550, directed the churchwardens "not to permit any buying, selling, gaming, outrageous noises, tumult, or any other idle occupying of youth in the church, churchporch, or churchyard, during the time of common-prayer, sermon, or reading of homily." In the Parker Society publications are other notes similar to the foregoing, showing that parsons acted as publicans, and that pedlars plied their trade in the churches and churchyards in the olden time.

At York, in 1806, a curious little book was

issued entitled "Anecdotes and Manners of a Few Ancient and Modern Oddities, interspersed with Deductive Inferences and Occasional Observations tending to reclaim some Interlocutory Foibles which often occur in the Common Intercourses of Society." It includes a chapter on a Parson-Publican. "The Rev. Mr. Carter," we are told, "when curate of Lastingham, had a very large family, with only a small income to support them, and therefore often had recourse to many innocent alternatives to augment it; and as the best of men have their enemies—too often more than the worst—he was represented to the archdeacon by an invidious neighbour as a very disorderly character, particularly by keeping a public-house, with the consequences resulting from it.

"The archdeacon was a very humane, worthy, good man, who had imbibed the principles, not only of a parson, but of a divine, and therefore treated such calumniating insinuations against his subordinate brethren with the contempt which would accrue to the satisfaction and advantage of such as listen to a set of sycophantic tattlers culled from the refuse of society. Besides the improbability of a malevolent story generally

renders it more current by increasing the scandal ; and the world, like the pious St. Austin, believes some things because they are impossible. However, he considered that not only the conduct of the inferior clergy claimed his attention, but also had some idea how far their subsistence was compatible with the sanctity of their functions ; therefore, at the ensuing visitation, when the business of the day was over, he, in a very delicate and candid manner, interrogated Mr. Carter as to his means of supporting so numerous a family—even thinking of this admirable hint to charity, that the more a person wants, the less will do him good—which was answered, as related to me by one well acquainted with the parties, in nearly the following words :—

“ ‘ I have a wife and thirteen children, and with a stipend of £20 per annum, increased only by a few trifling surplice fees. I will not impose upon your understanding by attempting to advance any argument to show the impossibility of us all being supported from my church preferment. But I am fortunate enough to live in a neighbourhood where there are many rivulets which abound with fish, and being particularly partial to angling, I am frequently so successful as to catch more

than my family can consume while good, of which I make presents to the neighbouring gentry, all of whom are so generously grateful as to requite me with something else of seldom less value than two or three fold. This is not all. My wife keeps a public-house, and as my parish is so wide that some of my parishioners have to come from ten to fifteen miles to church, you will readily allow that some refreshment before they return must occasionally be necessary, and when can they have it more properly than when their journey is half performed? Now, sir, from your general knowledge of the world, I make no doubt but you are well assured that the most general topics in conversation at public-houses are politics and religion, with which ninety-nine out of one hundred of those who participate in the general clamour are totally unacquainted; and that perpetually ringing in the ears of a pastor who has the welfare and happiness of his flock at heart, must be no small mortification. To divert their attention from these foibles over their cups, I take down my violin and play them a few tunes, which gives me an opportunity of seeing that they get no more liquor than necessary for refreshment; and if the young people propose a dance, I seldom

answer in the negative ; nevertheless, when I announce time for return, they are ever ready to obey my commands, and generally with the donation of a sixpence they shake hands with my children, and God bless them. Thus my parishioners enjoy a triple advantage, being instructed, fed, and amused at the same time. Moreover, this method of spending their Sundays is so congenial with their inclinations, that they are imperceptibly led along the paths of piety and morality ; whereas, in all probability, the most exalted discourses, followed with no variety but heavenly contemplations, would pass like the sounds of harmony over an ear incapable of discerning the distinction of sounds. It is this true sense of religion that has rendered my whole life so remarkably cheerful as it has been, to the great offence of superstitious and enthusiastic religionists. For why should priests be always grave ? Is it so sad to be a parson ? — Cheerfulness, even gaiety, is consonant with every species of virtue and practice of religion, and I think it inconsistent only with impiety and vice. The ways of heaven are pleasantness. Let ‘O be joyful’ be the Christian’s psalm, and leave to the sad Indian to incant the devil with tears and

screeches. Now, to corroborate my remarks upon cheerfulness as conducive to contentment, I will by leave solicit so much of your indulgence as to hear the following extract from the works of an eminent divine of the Established Church :— The Thirty-Nine Articles are incomplete without a fortieth precept enjoining cheerfulness ; or you may let the number stand as it does at present, provided you expunge the thirteenth article, and place that heavenly maxim in the room of it. Might not the Archbishop of Cashel have been a sound divine though he added the arch-stanza about Broglío to the old Irish ballad in praise of Moll Roe? Or did the Bishop (not the Earl) of Rochester's poem on the man-like properties of a lady's fan ever impeach his orthodoxy in the least ?'

“ Here the archdeacon very candidly acknowledged the propriety of Mr. Carter's arguments in defence of his conduct, and complimented him upon his discernment in using the most convenient vehicle for instruction ; observing that, although he might deviate a little from the plans generally advised for the accomplishment of that purpose, yet it bore no less authority than the celebrated Dr. Young, who wrote a play (‘ The Brothers ’)

for the propagation of the Gospel, the profits of which he consecrated to the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts."

Not a few clergymen of to-day deplore the modern methods of conducting public-houses, and are anxious to promote establishments that will serve a useful purpose, and some have even attempted their management with success.

Churches in War-Time.

FEW things would seem to have less in common than War, trumpet-tongued, tumultuous, and blood-stained, and the Church, the house of prayer and praise, the refuge of the penitent, and the shrine of the blessed dead. Yet strange as it may seem, the sanctity of the Church has not availed to protect it from participating in the woes that follow in the wake of war, nor to prevent its being turned, at times, into an instrument of battle and bloodshed.

For the most part these indignities have been forced upon the Church in the heat and fury of combat; yet in some few cases the possibility of their happening has been contemplated by church-builders, and the sacred edifice has been partly fashioned like a fortress. In the counties on the Scottish Border and along the Welsh Marches are several churches whose towers were constructed as defensive strongholds. In Cumberland and in North Yorkshire are several examples, and others occur in Hereford-

shire. Southern Scotland has also a few instances; and it is said that some churches in the south of France have been similarly treated. Massive walls; windows narrow, and only at a distance from the ground; doors, small, iron-clad, and within the church only; such are the common characteristics of these ecclesiastical keeps. Some, moreover, have fire-places in them and other provisions for the convenience of a small garrison; and one, at least—Bedale, in Yorkshire,—had a portcullis to protect its stair.* Henry VIII. evidently approved of this military use of churches, since in 1548 he roundly scolded the Mayor of Plymouth because he had not shown sufficient zeal in pushing forward the fortification of St. Michael's Chapel.

The instances in which the needs of a campaign have become excuses for occupying the church by a military force, although no special provision had been made for such profanation, are numerous, especially during the Civil War.

This has been the experience of several of our cathedrals. At Hereford the Royalists used the steeple as a convenient point from which to

* See a paper on "Fortified Church Towers," in "The Church Treasury of History, Custom, and Folk-lore" (Andrews & Co., London, 1898).

signal, and especially, by means of lights, to deceive their besiegers with false alarms. The Parliamentary forces, on the other hand, turned Exeter Cathedral into a magazine, storing there their powder and ammunition. In the siege of Worcester a battery was established upon the roof of the Collegiate Church, a small piece of brass ordnance being hoisted up thither; and in August, 1651, the young King Charles II. watched the preparations for the approaching battle from the summit of the tower. Durham Cathedral was used by the Scottish army as a place of confinement for their numerous prisoners, many of whom died within it.

The old parish church of Pontefract, All Saints' Church, lay between the castle and the lines of the Republicans; and its tower was therefore used by the Royalists as an outpost, a small battery being planted upon it. This drew a disastrous fire upon the church, which was left at the end of the war in ruins. A small part only of the building has been restored, and made available for divine service. Powderham Castle, Devonshire, being held by the Parliamentary forces, the Royalists, as a set off to this, garrisoned the church; which led to its being stormed by the

troops from the castle. The county of Devon affords many similar instances. For five weeks, in 1645, the church of Ottery St. Mary was simply a barrack for Roundhead troopers ; the churches of Tiverton and of St. Budeaux, held for the King, were stormed by his enemies ; and the Royalists, retreating from unsuccessful skirmishes, sought and found a defence within the stout walls of the churches of Axminster and of Ilsington. Similar stories are met with in all parts of the country. After Alford Fight, in Lincolnshire, for example, the victorious Roundheads pursued their foes into the parish church ; and did not suffer the sacred surroundings to rob them of the full spoils of conquest.

During the turmoil of that fierce time the license of warfare led to the infliction of much wanton damage, destruction, and indignity upon the churches throughout the land. Both sides, in their occasional needs, were glad to avail themselves of the strength of wall which the churches possessed ; but the Puritan armies of Cromwell, over and beyond this, delighted in desecrating what the people for the most part held sacred, and destroying what they held dear. And this was often done with a

coarseness, a brutality, not seldom a positive indecency, which it is impossible fully to describe here. Almost everywhere the organs were broken to pieces, the vestments torn to shreds, the books burnt, and the painted windows destroyed. At Winchester, at Canterbury, and elsewhere, the Roundhead soldiery rode through the streets clad in surplices and copes, braying on broken organ-pipes, or shouting ribald parodies of the Litany,—much after the manner of the Parisian mob in the Great Revolution, or under the Commune. At Lichfield they hunted cats with hounds, to the accompaniment of halloo and laughter, through the cathedral; and blasphemously parodied the Sacrament of Baptism, bringing a calf, wrapt in a sheet, to the font; at Peterborough they made a painting of Our Lord enthroned in glory a target for musket-shooting; at Winchester they rifled the tombs, and amused themselves by flinging the bones at the windows; at Canterbury they tore down the arras hangings on which were depicted scenes from the life of Christ, and stabbed at the Divine effigy with oaths and blasphemies; at Westminster they sat smoking and drinking at the altar, having sold the

organ-pipes at a neighbouring ale-house for liquor. The troopers' horses were stabled in the cathedrals of Worcester, St. Paul's, and Lincoln ; and that in such a fashion that a contemporary writer, speaking of the last-named church, says, "Lord Kimbolton would turn away his groom that should suffer his worst stable to lie half so nasty as he and Cromwell have made the House of God." Fonts, and even the sacred vessels of the altar, were put to the vilest possible uses ; all metal that could be found,—brass from tombs, lead from roofs and spouting, gold and silver altar-plate,—was invariably carried off ; and documents and records were everywhere given to the flames. The catalogue of abominations becomes tedious from the brainless iteration of childish destruction, and disgusting from the loathsomeness and blasphemy of the details. For a time England seemed to be given over either to Bedlam or Pandemonium—or both !

Traces of this Reign of Terror still exist in some places. The disappearance of our ancient rood-screens and other carved wood-work, the mutilation of tombs and sepulchral figures, and the rarity of old stained glass, all witness to the violence of that time. All round the

neighbourhood of Newark, fonts earlier than the seventeenth century are scarcely to be found ; from the fact that the Republicans, raiding that district, while the Royalists held Newark, smashed to pieces every font which they encountered. The walls of Penkridge Church, both within and without, are deeply scored by marks, which show where Roundhead pikes were sharpened for assailing the King's troops at Stafford Castle.

Newcastle-on-Tyne, staunchly loyal to King Charles, has a quaint story of the use made of its famous steeple. The Earl of Leven, commanding the 30,000 soldiers of the Commonwealth that had environed for ten weeks the gallant garrison of some 1,500 Royalists, sent word to the Mayor of the town, that if Newcastle did not immediately surrender, he would destroy the spire of St. Nicholas' Church. His Worship replied that, greatly as they valued the architectural glory of their ancient borough, they would not preserve it at so great a cost ; but that if it fell, it should not fall unavenged, for that they would fill the steeple with Roundhead prisoners, who would inevitably perish by its destruction. The steeple was saved.

GEO. S. TYACK.

Saltmarshe the Fanatic.

FANATICS were not at all rare in England during the time of the great civil war and the subsequent Protectorate. They were the natural outgrowth of the abrupt renunciation of Papal supremacy and Church authority and the assumption of private judgment in matters of faith and conscience at the Reformation. The Church of England, under Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, seemed to many little better than Roman Catholicism; and there rose up within its borders a numerous body of ultra-Protestants, who desired to clear away all the remaining vestiges of Popery, and thoroughly to purify the reformed Church, who hence obtained the name of Puritans. Not that these Puritans were all of one belief; they differed essentially, were of all shades of faith, and were united only on one point—that of getting rid of the corruptions of Romanism, and basing their faith on the Bible alone, without note or comment, each man to interpret it according to the light of his own understanding and judgment. The result was

that there grew up a multiplicity of sects, some of a most grotesque character, many tinctured with blasphemy, several frantic with enthusiasm, and not a few conspicuously absurd in the ignorant rendering of passages of the Scriptures, as displayed in their tenets. John Saltmarshe, therefore, the Yorkshire fanatic, could scarcely be deemed as belonging to a rare class at that time ; yet his fanaticism and prophesying did not develop themselves until late in life, and only culminated in his death, which was certainly very remarkable, if truly narrated.

He was a member of the ancient Saxon family of Saltmarshe, of Saltmarshe, near Howden, a manor of which they had held the lordship in the reign of King Harold, and probably earlier ; in which they were confirmed at the Conquest, when Sir Lionel, the then lord, did homage to William I., and which is still held by the family.

John Saltmarshe is supposed to have been born at Heslerton, on the Wolds, near Malton, towards the end of the sixteenth century. His parents would appear to have been in not very affluent circumstances, as Fuller speaks of him as being "extracted from a right ancient but decayed family," and that "his kinsman, Sir John

Metham, bountifully contributed to his education." He was sent to Cambridge, and graduated in Magdalen College, after which, adds Fuller, "retiring into his native county, he was very great with Sir John Hotham, the elder." This Sir John Hotham was he who shut the gates of Hull against King Charles I., and was a county neighbour residing at Scarborough, near Beverley, at the foot of the Wolds.

He was presented to a living at Northampton, "but," says Ant. à Wood, "upon the turn of the times in 1641, he, as a mutable man, became of a zealous observer, a virulent oppressor of Bishops and ceremonies. At that time he was a preacher at Northampton, and at other places, where he was much followed by and found esteem from such who entitled themselves—the godly." He then became a Presbyterian minister at Brasted, in Kent, but, says Ley, in his "Light for Smoak," "revolted from both his calling and charge." The fact is he had, by this time, gone beyond not only the Church of England, but Presbyterianism as well, and had become imbued with the ultra-Calvinistic doctrines of Antinomianism—an epidemic which then raged violently in England, and was not a sect of itself, but was

spread over all the sects. He then became a chaplain in Fairfax's new-modelled army, when he appears to have advanced still further in his opinions, embracing views analogous to those of the Fifth Monarchy Men, believing that the four great monarchies had run their race, and that the fifth—that of Christ—was close at hand, when He, in his abiding manhood, would descend upon earth, and establish the kingdom of the saints, after destroying all the wicked, and Himself govern it, as Monarch, for a thousand years, after which would come the great day of account.

During all this time neither his tongue nor his pen had been idle. Neal describes him as a "person of a fine active fancy, no contemptible poet, and a good preacher." He had several controversies on Prelacy and Presbytery, Presbytery and Antinomianism, with Dr. Gatacre, Rev. John Ley, and others, yet "he always preached up love and peace, and meddled not in the pulpit with Presbytery or Independency, but laboured to draw souls from sin to Christ." He had one controversy with Fuller, who says:—"He wrote a book against my sermon of Reformation, taxing me for many points of Popery therein. I

defended myself in a book called 'Truth Maintained,' and challenged him to an answer, who appeared in the field no more, rendering this reason thereof—that he would not shoot his arrows against a dead mark, being informed that I was dead at Exeter. I have no cause to be angry with fame (but rather to thank her) for so good a lye. May I make this true use of that false report to dye daily. See how Providence hath crossed it. The dead (reported) man is still living (1662). The then living man dead, and seeing I survive to go over his grave, I will tread the more gently over the mould thereof, using that civility on him which I received from him."

He published several works of a polemical and devotional character, some of them with very quaint titles, such as "Holy Discoveries and Flames, 1640;" "Free Grace; or the Flowing of Christ's Blood freely for sinners: being an experiment of Jesus Christ upon one who hath been in the bondage of a troubled spirit at times for twelve years till now, 1645;" "Shadows Flying Away, 1646," replied to by Dr. Gatacre in "Shadows with Substances;" "The Smoak of the Temple: wherein is a design for peace and reconciliation of believers of the several opinions

of these times about ordinances, 1646 ;” “ Dawnings of Light, 1646 ;” “ Groanes for Liberty, presented from the Presbyterian (formerly Nonconforming) Brethren . . . in some Treatises called ‘ Smectymnus ’ to . . . Parliament in the yeare 1641, by reason of the Prelate’s tyranny, 1646 ;” “ A Beam of Light to Discover a Way to Peace, 1646 ;” “ Sparkles of Glory ; or, some beams of the Morning Star, 1647 ;” “ Perfume against the Sulphurous Stinke of the Snuff of the ‘ Light for Smoak ’ called ‘ Novello-Mastrix,’ with a check to Cerbero-Diabolus and a whip for his barking against the Parliament and armie, &c., 1646.” This was in reply to the Rev. John Ley’s answer to the “ Smoak of the Temple,” in which he charged Saltmarshe with revolting from his pastoral calling, who in his reply says—“ Not revolted from his pastoral calling, but departed from the anti-Christian ministry by Bishops, and now a Preacher of the Gospel.”

The year 1647 was drawing to a close ; the decisive battle of Naseby had been fought ; Fairfax had subdued the western counties ; the King, who had fled for refuge to the Scottish Presbyterians, was sold by them to the army,

under General Fairfax and Lieutenant-General Cromwell, and was now a prisoner in the Isle of Wight. The war was thus virtually at an end, and Saltmarshe retired from his chaplaincy and was living with his wife at Ilford, in Essex. The religious world of England was split into two great antagonistic parties, the Presbyterians, of whom the Parliament was mainly composed, and the Independents, of whom the bulk of the army consisted, under the leadership of Cromwell, with innumerable minor sects, each one too small to exercise much influence in the direction of affairs. The two great parties were now struggling for pre-eminence; the Presbyterians wishing for a modified form of Monarchy, the Independents for a Republic, and it almost seemed as if a new civil war would break out between the two; but "Pride's purge" had been applied to the Parliament by Cromwell, the obnoxious Presbyterian element eliminated, and the Independent "Rump" left to act in concert with the army. Eleven members had been imprisoned, and others of various sects who were deemed dangerous had been subjected to persecution and imprisonment at the hands of the Independents, who had now got the upper hand.

During his life, Saltmarshe's religious opinions had undergone many mutations and modifications, and now that he had settled down at Ilford, he had arrived at supernaturalism, having vouchsafed to him heavenly visions, and speaking as one gifted with the spirit of prophecy—the result, perhaps, of a slight aberration of the intellect, caused by an overtaxing of the brain, giving utterance, as Fuller informs us, “to strange expressions, apprehended (by some of his party) as extatical, yea prophetical raptures.” It was when matters were in the position above-mentioned that he was thrown into a trance and caught up to heaven, where he found the greatest interest prevailing as to the progress of events in a little island of one of the smaller planets of one of the million solar systems of the universe, and considerable anxiety as to what Cromwell would do, and how the saints would be treated by the dominant Independents; and was commissioned with a message to the commanders of the army, which was then lying at Windsor.

In the morning he told his wife that he had had a vision, and had received a message from God to the army, which it was incumbent on him to deliver at once, as it would be his last errand

upon earth. Being Sunday, he had some difficulty in procuring a horse, but he at length succeeded, and rode to London, where he met with Sir Henry Mildmay, a member of Parliament, to whom he communicated the same intelligence, and after dinner resumed his journey to Windsor. It was a fine, frosty day in December, but in the darkness of the evening he lost his way, and had to lodge in a village for the night, where he preached, declaring that "the great and dreadful day of the Lord was at hand, when all men should be judged by the Lord Jesus Christ," which produced some consternation amongst his auditors. The following day he proceeded on his journey, but again missed his way in a forest, and rode hither and thither for a long time, until at length he espied a cottage in the distance, and made up for it, where he was hospitably received by an old man and woman, who placed refreshments before him, and whom he told that "God was about to destroy the wicked and draw the saints unto himself;" after which he was put on the right road, and arrived at Windsor about nine o'clock in the morning. He was well known in the army, and as he entered the camp the first person he met was

an adjutant, who saluted him, to whom he replied—"Depart from these tents, lest you perish with them, for the Lord hath revealed to me that He is angry with the army, because they have forsaken Him." A captain met him, who asked after his health, to whom he said, "he had no message for him, because he had always been a seeker under specious pretences." To another, that "he could not own him, as he was given up to destruction." He then went to the Council of War, where he found the officers waiting the arrival of the General, and told them that "he was come to reveal the Lord's commands—that though God had done much for them and by them, yet He had forsaken them because they had forsaken Him; that He would not prosper them in their consultations, but destroy them by divisions amongst themselves; that formerly he had come among them like a lamb, but now God had raised in him the spirit of a lion, because they had sought to destroy His people." They replied that he must be distracted, or had been sick and in mental disorder, and was not yet recovered. He replied that "he had been sick, but was now perfectly well and sensible of what he was saying; that what he spoke was a

revelation from God, and that this was the last time they would hear him speak," adding—"The controversy now before you calls for the tenderest judgment, because it concerns the faithful ones—those imprisoned of your own members, having always stood by you through the greatest difficulties. I advise all the faithful to depart from you, lest they be destroyed with you." All the time, as he spoke, his limbs appeared rigid, his countenance pale as that of a corpse, and his eyes fixed and expressionless, as if he were in a trance.

He then went to General Fairfax, and without the usual courtesy of removing his hat, or even saluting him, said abruptly, "I have a command from God not to honour you at all, and, indeed, I have offended Him by honouring you too much and doting upon your person. But understand this, that He will no longer prosper you and your army for your cruel persecution of His saints." From him he went to Cromwell, the Lieutenant-General, who offered to shake hands with him, and asked him how he did. Instead of returning the salute, he broke out with—"The Lord is angry with you for causing these godly men to be imprisoned, slighted, and abused for those engagements which you yourself formerly owned; men

whom you know to be faithful in the cause of God. You and the army are falling away from your first principles, and that will undo you, for God will cause such factions to rise up amongst you as will end in your ruin and destruction." Cromwell said he "wondered to hear such passages fall from his lips," but acknowledged that "there were many things not as he would wish."

Saltmarshe spent the night in the camp, conversing until late with Hugh Peters and a company of officers, and in the morning had another interview with Cromwell, whom he urged to make his peace with God by "enlarging the members of the army who were committed for not complying with the Council, and by remitting the persecution of the faithful."

The same day, the 8th, he rode to London, visited several of his friends, of whom he took leave, saying that his work was done, and his Heavenly Master had bid him come to his eternal rest. On the 9th, he proceeded to Ilford, perfectly well, eating his meals, and going about his business as usual with perfect composure. On the 10th, still untouched by sickness, he said to his wife, "My dear Mary, you will soon be a widow ; but do not grieve, for I have finished

my course. I have done the last work God has given me to do, and now He calls me home ; and it is with gladness I gird up my loins for this last journey, which will bring me to the realm of heavenly bliss, and to the presence of my Lord and Saviour, the holy hierarchy of angels, and the prophets, martyrs, and saints of the past." On the morning of the same day he was suddenly struck speechless, and at four or five o'clock in the afternoon he calmly breathed his last.

In 1649, Mary, his wife, published " England's Friend raised from the Grave ; giving seasonable advice to the Lord General, the Lieut.-General, and the Council of Warre ; Being true copies of 3 letters, written by Mr. Jn. Saltmarshe, a little before his death. Heb. xi. 4, 'He being dead yet speaketh.' "

FREDERICK ROSS.

Church Umbrellas.

IT is a fact not generally known that before the umbrella came into general use in this country it was employed by the clergy at funerals as a means of protection against rain.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wolfe, afterwards General Wolfe, in 1752, wrote a letter from Paris, in which he said :—" The people here use umbrellas in hot weather to defend them from the sun, and something of the same kind to save them from the snow and rain. I wonder that a practice so useful is not introduced into England."

About the period the future conqueror of Quebec sent his letter, the umbrella had been brought to London. Jonas Hanway, a celebrated traveller and philanthropist, returned, in 1750, to England from Persia. In 1787, under the title of " Remarkable Occurrences in the Life of Jonas Hanway," by John Pugh, it is stated that Hanway "was the first man who ventured to walk the streets of London with an umbrella over his head. After carrying one for nearly thirty years he saw them come into general use." It appears from

allusions in old books, that ladies long before men used umbrellas in England. We may infer from the following announcement, copied from the *Female Tatler*, of December 12th, 1709, that this useful article, at this period, was regarded as too effeminate for the use of a man:—"The young gentleman borrowing the umbrella belonging to Wills' Coffee-house, Cornhill, of the mistress, is hereby advertised, that to be dry from head to foot on the like occasion, he shall be welcome to the maid's pattens."

About this time it was customary to keep an umbrella in the halls of large houses for use in rainy weather, for shelter in proceeding from the house to a covered conveyance, and doubtless the one alluded to in the advertisement above quoted was for that purpose.

The earliest entries relating to an umbrella for the use of a clergyman we have found in any churchwardens' accounts occur in those of St. Nicholas' Church, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and are as follow:—

"1717.	Paid for an umbrella for the	
	churche's use - - - -	£1 5s. od.
1717.	Paid Theo. Melburne for charges	
	about ye umbrella - - - -	£0 2s. od."
		15

In the accounts of St. John the Baptist Church, Chester, the following items occur :—

- “1727. Paid Mr. George Marsh for an
umbrell for the parish use - £0 10s. od.
1786. Paid for Umbrell for Mr. Richard-
son to read Burial Service under £1 6s. od.”

The accounts of Wrexham contain an entry :—

- “April 2, 1742. Per William Wright for
Umbrellow - - - - £1 1s. od.”

At Wakefield the following items appear in the accounts :—

- “1754. Oct. 19th. Cash paid for an
umbrella - - - - £2 os. od.
1754. Box and carriage for umbrella - £0 4s. od.”

A woman was paid for taking charge of the Wakefield parish umbrella, and entries similar to the following occur in the accounts :—

- “1770. Jan. 2. Dame Lofthouse for bring-
ing out the Umbrella - - £0 5s. od.
1770. May 26. Dame Lofthouse 1/2
year for umbrella - - - £0 5s. od.”

In the parish accounts of Bradford, Yorkshire, is an entry :—

- “January 7th, 1780. Paid for an Umberlo
for Rev. Mr. Hamilton - - £0 17 6.”

The Prestbury churchwardens' accounts contain an entry :—

"Nov. 11, 1747—Pd. for an Umbrella and Box
and Carriage - - - - - £3 0 6."

At Burnley a charge is made in the churchwardens' accounts as follows:—

"1760-1—Umbrella - - - - - £2 10 0."

In 1769 a parish umbrella was purchased for Ulverston, and the following entries appear in the churchwardens' accounts:—

"June 3, 1769—to John Cannon for a Pike
for ye umbrella - - - - - £0 0 8
7, 1769—W. Kendal for a Churchyard
umbrella - - - - - 2 2 0
carriage of do. from London - - - 0 3 11
a canvas cover - - - - - 0 1 0."

"The iron pike," says the Rev. Charles W. Bardsley, "would be attached to the pole or stick, and thrust into the ground, so as to save the clerk the trouble of holding it while the minister read the burial office." *

At Leigh, Lancashire, is an item in the accounts as under:—

"1755. Pd. John Orm's Bill for Umbrellow £0 8s. od."

The churchwardens' accounts of Penkridge, Staffordshire, supply an item:—

"1781. Paid for an ombrella - - - 18s. od."

* Bardsley's "Chronicles of the Town and Church of Ulverston," 1885.

According to the churchwardens' accounts of High Wycombe, the following payment was made :—

“1764. For the Umbrelloe - - - £1 8 3.”

From the parish book of Cranbrook, Kent, are the following figures :—

“1785. Pd. for an Umbrella - - - £0 12s. od.

1786. Pd. for Umbrella - - - £0 15s. od.”

In the churchwardens' accounts of Aughton, near Ormskirk, is an entry :—

“1787. An Umbrella for Minister - - o 14 o.”

A charge is made in the same year for a “Beadle's Wig,” costing three shillings. Boardman, in his “Liverpool Table Talk, a hundred years ago,” referring to the first Liverpool Directory, 1766, tells us that “umbrellas had not been introduced.”

The churchwardens' accounts of Over, Cheshire, contain an entry :—

“1798. An umbrella - - - - £1 10s. od.”

In the “Life and Correspondence of Samuel Hibbert Ware, M.D.” (Manchester, 1882), we find particulars of the prices of umbrellas for private use, and it is interesting to compare these with the amounts paid for those used by the clergy

of the period. It is recorded, in 1779, that Mr. James Watson was paid for an umbrella £1 10s. od.; and later, 5s. for a silk-cover, and making two for umbrellas £1.

One of the earliest umbrellas seen at Taunton was the private property of the clergyman, and when he carried it to church on a Sunday he left it in the porch for the edification and delight of his parishioners.

It is recorded that the first lady to carry an umbrella in public in Wakefield walked along the back streets when carrying it to avoid the gaze and remarks of curious persons, and to get out of the way of children who were not a little excited to see such a novelty.

The introduction of the umbrella in some places has been regarded of sufficient importance to be included in the local annals. About 1780 a red Leghorn umbrella was introduced into Bristol, and it created quite a sensation in the city. It was about the same period that an umbrella was first carried in the streets of Stamford, Lincolnshire. It was of Chinese manufacture, and was brought to Stamford from Glasgow. Mrs. Stockdale, in 1776, is recorded to have brought from the island of Granada, in

the West Indies, the first umbrella seen in Cartmell, Lancashire. In 1779, Dr. Spens, a popular physician, carried an umbrella in the streets of Edinburgh, and he is credited with introducing it into the Scottish capital. Mr. John Jameson, a Glasgow surgeon, visited Paris about 1781 or 1782, and brought back with him an umbrella, which was the first seen in Glasgow, where it attracted unusual attention.

It is related by Horace Walpole in his account of the punishment of Dr. Shebbeare for libel, December 5th, 1758, that when he was in the pillory a footman held over him an umbrella to keep off the rain. This has been described as an aristocratic style of bearing punishment. The under-sheriff got into trouble for permitting the indulgence.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

Curates Wanted in Olden Times.

THE following advertisement, dated September 17th, 1768, is copied from an old newspaper :—

“A clergyman of good life and behaviour, whose voice is strong, and pronunciation distinct, by applying to the Vicar of Wirksworth, in the County of Derby, may enter upon the Curacy of Wirksworth aforesaid at Michaelmas next, or at such time (not exceeding three months computed from the date of this advertisement) as is consistent with his present engagements. The salary allowed is forty guineas a year, paid quarterly by equal proportions.”

The stipend offered in the next advertisement, which appeared in 1716, is small :—

“If any clergyman of good character has the misfortune to be destitute of preferment, and will accept a curacy of £27 in money yearly, and a horse kept, let him with speed send to Mr. Wilson, bookseller in Boston; Mr. Ross, bookseller in Louth, or the Reverend Mr. Charles Burnett, of Burgh in the Marsh, near Spilsby, in the County of Lincoln, and he may be further satisfied.”

It will be observed that the remuneration of the curacy in Derbyshire is much more liberal than that of the one in Lincolnshire, but the Wirksworth vicar wanted a curate with a “strong

voice," and possibly this circumstance was taken into consideration when he fixed the rate of the wages. The smallness of the salary is, however, suggestive of Goldsmith's parson "passing rich on forty pounds a year," though the lot of the Auburn priest was cast in Ireland, where the cost of living was less than in England.

Cresset Stones.

SOME interesting examples of cresset stones still remain, and serve to remind us of the far distant past, when it was not an easy matter to preserve a light, and when fires were chiefly obtained by friction. Long before Christianity was dominant in pre-historic settlements in a hut the aborigines kept a fire constantly burning for the use of the community. From these rude fires in later ages originated the worship of Vesta. Every care was exercised to keep burning the light which had been obtained with no little trouble. In towns and villages it was the duty of unmarried women constantly to guard the flame from extinction. The fire was located in a central circular hut, and from it were obtained lights for all the hearths in the place.

We gather from Ovid that the first temple of Vesta in Rome was similar to the primitive huts of the inhabitants, which consisted of wattled walls roofed with thatch. It was little other, says the Rev. S. Baring-Gould, than a circular, covered fire-place, and was tended by the unmarried girls of the infant community. It served as the public

hearth of Rome, and on it glowed, unextinguished throughout the year, the sacred fire, which was supposed to have been brought from Troy, and the continuance of which was thought to be linked with the fortunes of the city.*

It was regarded as a most serious offence if the vestal maiden allowed her sacred fire to fail. With much ceremony it was rekindled; it could not be lighted from the common hearths, or from fire obtained from strange places, and fresh light was obtained by rubbing together dry wood, or focussing the sun's rays. The offending maiden was severely flogged by the Grand Pontiff.

Fire-worship was widely spread. When St. Patrick visited Ireland to proclaim Christianity, he found a temple at Tara where a fire burned, and was on no account allowed to be extinguished. As a matter of convenience the church was converted into the place where the perpetual fire burnt. Here a fire was kept burning, here candles might be lighted for the services of the church, and here the people of the parish might obtain a light for their home use. The early teachers had to make it clear that the old gods were not associated with the fires of the church.

* Baring-Gould's "Strange Survivals," 1892.

Cresset stones is the name given to the contrivances for maintaining perpetual fires in churches. An interesting example still remains *in situ* at Lewannick Church, Cornwall. It is not far from the door, and is described as



CRESSET STONE, WOOL CHURCH, DORSETSHIRE.

consisting of a circular block, containing on its flat upper surface, which is twenty-two inches across, seven cup-like hollows, four and a half inches deep. The stone stands on a rudely moulded base, octagonal, and is in all about two feet six inches high. Our illustration is from

a recent photograph by Hayman and Son, Launceston.

Dr. Alfred C. Fryer read, on November 2nd, 1898, before the British Archæological Association, "Notes on Wool Church, Dorset," and in course of his address described a cresset stone still preserved at this church, and nearly as perfect as the day it left the hands of the mediæval workman. It is rectangular in shape, measuring nine and a half inches by seven and a half inches and five inches deep. The cups are placed in each corner of the stone, and they are three and three-quarter inches deep, with a diameter of three and a half inches. Dr. Fryer adds that the surfaces of the cups are blackened as if by unctuous matter having been burnt in them. It is suggested that the cresset stone may have been brought from Bindon Abbey, which was founded in 1172, and situated not far distant from Wool. If this suggestion is correct, it will at once be seen that the stone is about seven centuries old. We are enabled by the courtesy of Dr. Fryer and the Council of the British Archæological Association to reproduce an illustration of the cresset stone at Wool.

Amongst the ruins of several ancient abbeys these stones have been found. At Calder Abbey

one was discovered having sixteen fire-cups, and at Furness Abbey was found a stone with five cups in it. In "A description or Briefe declaration of all the Ancient Monuments, Rites, and Customes, belonging or beinge within the Monasticall Church of Durham before the suppression," written 1593, are particulars of a cresset stone in the church, and of two in the dormitory. "There is," says the account, "standinge on the south pillar of the Quire doore of the Lanthorne, in a corner of the same pillar, a four-squared stone, which hath been finely wrought in every square a large fine image, whereon did stand a four-squared stone above that which had twelve cressets, and every night one of them was lighted, when the day was gone, and did burn and give light to the monkes at midnight when they came to mattens." The notice of those in the dormitory is as follows:—"In either end of the same dorter was a four square stone, wherein was a dozen cressets wrought in either stone, being ever filled and supplied with the cooke as they needed, to give light to the monkes and novices, when they rose to their mattens at midnight, and for their other necessary uses." York in the olden days must

have had numerous cresset stones, but we only know of one now, and it has six fire-cups.*

Examples of cresset stones may be traced in many other places in England, and on the Continent many interesting specimens may be seen.

It will be gathered from the facts we have been able to present in this paper that in course of time a religious signification was given to cressets, but their origin was to furnish a flame from which lights might be obtained for general use.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

* Baring-Gould's "Strange Survivals," 1892.

Crooked Spires.

IT may be stated, without fear of contradiction, that the inhabitants of Chesterfield admire their crooked spire. A well-known antiquary says it is "one of the most singular curiosities of church architecture, not only in Derbyshire, but in the United Kingdom."

The date of its erection is not known, but Dr. Cox makes it clear in his work that the tower was not built prior to 1350, and probably the spire was constructed between 1350-70. It is of octagonal shape, and built of timber and lead. The way in which the lead is applied, irrespective of the crookedness of the spire, gives it a unique appearance. The lead is applied in diagonally placed parallelograms, and so arranged as to divide each of the eight sides into two distinct and channelled planes. *

Several eminent authorities on church architecture have stated that there is not any real crookedness of this spire, and that it is an optical

* Cox's "Churches of Derbyshire."

delusion, resulting from the mode of placing the lead. Daniel Defoe described Chesterfield, in the earlier years of the eighteenth century, as a handsome and populous town, with a fair church. The spire of its steeple, being timber and covered with lead, seems to be warped awry. This appearance is a mere *deceptio visus*, owing to the spiral form of the sheets of lead; for if you change your situation, it appears to be bent a different way from what it seemed before.* Glover, the county historian, speaks of its leaning appearance, and the compilers of gazetteers and directories usually adopt this view. More remarkable still is the statement of Rickman. He says, "The apparent leaning of the spire arises partly from the curious spiral mode of putting on the lead, and partly from a real inclination of the general lines of the woodwork of the spire."† "The lead is so disposed," states Parker, "as to give the appearance of the spire being twisted."‡ Dr. Cox, in a carefully-written chapter on this church, shows that the theory of an optical delusion is erroneous, and that, as a matter of fact, it leans considerably to the south. The Rev. G. Hall,

* "Tour through Great Britain." 1724-7.

† Rickman's "Gothic Architecture."

‡ Parker's "Glossary of Architecture,"



CHESTERFIELD PARISH CHURCH.

the local historian, tells us that "by measurement in January, 1818, the ball on which the weathercock is fixed was found to lean toward the south six feet from the perpendicular of its base, and four feet four inches out of its perpendicular towards the west ; therefore its greatest deviation from the perpendicular of its base is nearly at the angle between these two points, or nearly at south-west. If the sun continues to have influence on the materials of the spire, as no doubt it has, though in a very moderate degree in comparison to what it had when the timber was put up, there will be a time when the deviation it now has from the perpendicular of its base will be so much increased that it must inevitably drop to the ground. How many years may elapse before it thus gets beyond its balance it is difficult to say, but there is no doubt it will continue drooping more and more, even if there was nothing more than its own inclining weight to occasion it." *

As might be expected, not a few theories are held by those who believe in the reality of the twist, and the chief are as follows :—(a) Intended eccentricity of construction ; (b) struck by light-

* Hall's "History of Chesterfield."

ning ; (*c*) heavy pressure of lead ; (*d*) warping by the action of the sun. Each of these theories is discussed at length by Dr. Cox ; the first he does not regard as worthy of serious consideration, and agrees with Rhodes, who says, "No man who ever lived would voluntarily erect an object of deformity, a thing that in its form and outline was offensive to the eye, and in opposition to every principle of taste."* There are no traces of the action of lightning on the timber, so that the second theory may be dismissed. "In our opinion," says Dr. Cox, "the true solution is to be found in the third and fourth theories. It seems probable that the various beams of which the framework of the spire is composed were put up in an insufficiently seasoned condition, and insecurely rivetted together, without allowance being made for the great weight of the requisite mass of lead. The clinging pressure of the lead might thus cause a certain irregular subsidence in the timbers, and this would be greatly assisted by the powerful sun beating through the lead on to the green parts of the woodwork. That the real explanation is to be found in a combination of these two causes seems the more probable, as a

* Rhodes's "Peak Scenery."

close examination of the beams proves two faults—firstly, that many of them (especially the smaller ones) are unmistakably warped; and secondly, that the joints have gaped and given way in places where there is no appearance of this having been caused by warping or contraction. That the action of the sun has been one of the most powerful agencies at work is further shown from the fact that the timbers are the most displaced and twisted from their original position on the south side—the side most exposed to the influence of its rays. There is no necessity to imagine that this subsidence and distortion took place suddenly, still less, as some have supposed, that it only came about in late years. The most reasonable supposition is that it assumed very nearly, if not precisely, its present singularity within two or three years of its erection, but that the displacement went on gradually during that period.”* We think that our readers will agree with us that the conclusions of Dr. Cox are correct, and that he clearly indicates the cause of the crooked spire.

Towards the close of 1817 fears were entertained as to the safety of the spire, and experts were

* Cox's "Churches of Derbyshire."

requested to report on its condition. A local firm pronounced it unsafe, and thought that it would in a few years fail in the middle of the steeple. Their opinion was confirmed by another surveyor, who advised that the most effectual, safe, and economical course would be to take it down and erect one of stone. A third authority pronounced it eminently unsafe and dangerous, and "that it would be impossible to repair it, even at any expense, so as to insure it standing many years." A vestry meeting was called to consider the advisability of the demolition of the spire, and the reports were submitted. The opposition to the removal of the spire was so strong that it was agreed to have further opinion. Mr. James Ward, of Sheffield, was consulted, and after careful inspection reported under date of January 24th, 1818, that with slight repairs it might stand almost indefinitely. This report was confirmed by three practical carpenters, and was adopted, greatly to the satisfaction of many of the inhabitants of the town.

During the violent gales of 1869 a large portion of the lead was blown from the framework, and a public subscription was raised to replace it, and it is satisfactory to learn that members of

all religious denominations came forward with liberal donations.*

The spire again suffered much from severe



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, DAVOS-PLATZ.

storms, and Mr. Temple Moore, architect, of London, was asked to report on the condition of the fabric. The result of his examination was

* Andrews's "Derbyshire Gatherer."

published in October, 1895. It was stated that many important timbers were badly rotted, and after a second examination, he recommended, under date of January 7th, 1897, that the work of overhauling and restoring should be undertaken at once or the spire be taken down. The work of restoration was successfully carried out, and there is every prospect of the Chesterfield Crooked Spire remaining for ages. Once more Churchmen and Nonconformists were united in raising funds for the necessary repairs.

The steeple of St. John's Church, Davos-Platz, Switzerland, somewhat resembles that of Chesterfield. It is the highest and oldest steeple in the Canton of Grison, dating back four centuries. There is not any charm of architectural beauty about the building, but it is quaint, and its associations are full of historic interest. It has been designated as one of the few remaining signs in the whole of the *landschaft* which show that Davos was once the seat of a wealthy and powerful oligarchy. This church and the Rathhaus are referred to in the *Landbuch of Davos*, or digest of its common law, compiled in the year 1596. One of the ordinances directs the sexton in summer to

bury people in the north side of the churchyard, so that in winter the less frozen part might be used. Pigs were not permitted to feed in the burial-ground. The tower contains two bells, and in the history of the past they have played an important part. "That tower," remarks the late John Addington Symonds, "with its belfry and spire symbolises the voice of the supreme authority. There is a special and important statute upon *Sturmlauten*, or ringing of the tocsin. When that brazen clang was heard in the valley, all the members of the *Landsgemeinde*, that is, every Davos citizen from the age of fourteen to seventy, was bound to obey the Landammann's call. He must leave his work or business, his merry-makings or his sorrowings at death-beds. The Landammann needed him for public matters of importance—perhaps to take some weighty decision in affairs of war; perhaps to hunt the wolf or extinguish a fire; perhaps to mend roads impaired by swollen rivulets in summer; perhaps to dig roads out of huge drifts of snow which mound them up in winter. No one between the age of fourteen and seventy was exempt from public service upon occasions of these kinds, and the Landammann

made his orders heard through the voice of the bells rung jangling.”*

Mr. Symonds, in “Our Life in the Swiss Highlands,” gives an interesting account of the peculiar method of ringing the bells at Davos-Platz by the hands of men in pairs on the eve of the New Year.

Davos-Platz of to-day has many attractions, but to the lover of olden times and ways few are more charming than the old church of St. John with its crooked spire.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

* “Our Life in the Swiss Highlands.”

Buried Chimes.

THE PHANTOM BELLS.

“ Above the sounding of the sea
The phantom music swells,
Wild chime and pæan clear and loud,
The spirit of the bells.

Cry not, ye messengers of Death,
On yonder ruddy sail ;
So fair the sky—so calm the shore—
Wake not the mourner's wail.

Yet fathoms deep I hear you swing ;
Your melody ensnares ;
Call not the souls of those who sleep,
The living breathe their prayers.

Above the terror of the storm,
Beyond the cruel rocks,
Rising and falling with the wind
The ghostly ringing mocks.

Sound on, strange requiem for the dead,
Above the sobbing sea ;
Your mystic chiming breaks my heart
For all that yet shall be.”

—PATTY HONEYWOOD.

SOME strange stories are told of bells being lost in the sea, and it is said under certain circumstances their chiming may still be heard. These old-time tales have been made the theme of pleasing poems, and it will not be without interest to give a few of the more popular pieces, which will doubtless recall to the minds of many of

our readers similar legends in prose and poetry still lingering in different parts of the country.

The legendary lore which gathers round the ruined abbey on the crown of the cliffs of Whitby is extensive and interesting, not the least attractive



WHITBY ABBEY.

being the stories respecting the ancient bells. In 1539 this abbey was suppressed and soon dismantled, but sufficient was left to show its former glory, and it still remains one of the most beautiful ruins in the North of England. The bells were sold, says Parkinson in his "Legends and

Traditions of Yorkshire," and were to be conveyed in a ship to London. They were duly placed on board, and, amid the lamentation of the people, the sails were unfurled and the anchor weighed. But, lo! the vessel refused to bear away its sacred burden. A short distance it moved out into the bay, and then—on a beautiful calm summer evening—it quietly sank beneath the waves; and there under the waters, at a spot within sight of the abbey ruins, the bells still remain, and are still heard occasionally, by the superstitious, rung by invisible hands.

Mrs. Susan K. Phillips, the gifted author of many popular poems, dealing with the life and superstitions of the fisher-folk of Whitby, gives a somewhat different version of the legend in the following poem, entitled "The Buried Chime":—

"Under the cliffs at Whitby, when the great tides landward
flow,

Under the cliffs at Whitby, when the great winds landward
blow,

When the long billows heavily roll o'er the harbour bar,
And the blue waves flash to silver 'mid the sea-weeds on the
Scar.

When the low thunder of the surf calls down the hollow
shore,

And 'mid the caves at Kettleness the baffled breakers roar;

Under the cliffs at Whitby, who so will stand alone,
Where in the shadow of the Nab the eddies swirl and moan.

When to the pulses of the deep, the flood-tide rising swells,
Will hear amid its monotone, the clash of hidden bells.

Up from the heart of ocean the mellow music peals,
Where the sunlight makes his golden path, and the sea-mew
flits and wheels.

For many a chequered century, untired by flying time,
The bells, no human fingers touch, have rung their hidden
chime,

Since the gallant ship that brought them, for the abbey on
the height,
Struck and foundered in the offing, with her sacred goal in
sight.

And the man who dares on Hallowe'en on the black Nab to
watch,
Till the rose-light on St. Hilda's shrine the midnight moon-
beams catch,

And calls his sweetheart by her name, as o'er the sleeping
seas

The echo of the buried bells comes floating on the breeze,

Ere another moon on Hallowe'en her eerie rays has shed,
Will hear his wedding-peal ring out from the church-tower
on the Head."

Mrs. G. M. Tweddell (Florence Cleveland),
author of "Rhymes and Sketches to Illustrate
the Cleveland Dialect," and a keen student of
local lore, gives yet another rendering of the

legend in the following lines, bearing the title of
“St. Hilda’s Bells”:—

“The sea was calm, the clouds hung low,
And on his good ship’s deck
The pirate walked in sullen mood,
A man no laws could check.

His crew look’d on all silently,
For none durst question him ;
They knew he plann’d some daring deed,
To do when night grew dim.

At length he stopp’d. ‘My men,’ quoth he,
‘See you old Whitby town ?
I’th’ abbey tower some bells are hung,—
This night we’ll have them down.

‘Cast anchor there below the cliff,—
A stout heart never quells ;
Be brave, my lads ! and we to-night
Will steal St. Hilda’s bells.

‘The task is heavy. Ha, ha, ha !’
The pirate laughed with glee ;
‘Our ship will bear a weighty load,
When we put out to sea.

‘Our stoutest ropes will lower them down,
And when our prize we win,
We’ll pledge St. Hilda’s memory
In a keg of Holland’s gin.’

’Tis bootless here to tell the toil
Of the pirate’s hardy crew,
Or with what oaths he urged them on,
For quick the night hours flew,

Before the dawn a wind arose,
But all were safe on board ;
Their work was done, the prize was won,
The ship had got its load.

They laid them down to rest awhile,
But the winds blew louder then :
'The storm has come,' the captain cried,
'Put out to sea, my men !'

Louder and louder grew the blast,—
The sea ran mountains high ;
But not a yard the ship will move,
Howe'er so hard they try.

'Our ship is doom'd !' the pirate said,
'A curse is on its load.
Oh, evil night that ere we took
Such fearsome goods on board !

'Unload the ship !' he bellow'd forth,—
But all unheeded then
His mandate fell upon the ears
Of his terror-stricken men.

The lightning flash'd, the thunder roll'd,
More fierce the storm raged on :
No help for them ; when morning dawn'd
Both ship and crew were gone.

Beneath the cliff the vessel sank,
With no one there to save ;
The bells went with the lawless crew,
Down to their watery grave.

And the old folks say, that to this day,
When storm the ocean swells,

Above the raging of the wind,
Are heard Saint Hilda's bells.

Old grand-dames shiver at the sound,—
They hear them loud and clear,
Ring, ring, ring, ring, but younger folks
The bells can never hear."

The old name of Boscastle was Bottreaux, and there is a legend that a peal of bells cast on the Continent and intended for its church tower were lost at sea within sight of their destination. At Tintagel, a neighbouring parish, is a fine peal of six bells. The legend of the Cornish folk has been well told by the Rev. Robert Stephen Hawker, in a poem entitled "The Silent Tower of Bottreaux." It is as follows:—

"Tintagel bells ring o'er the tide,
The boy leans on his vessel's side,
He hears that sound, and dreams of home
Soothe the wild orphan of the foam.
 'Come to thy God in time,'
 Thus saith their pealing chime;
 'Youth, manhood, old age past,
 Come to thy God at last.'

But why are Bottreaux's echoes still?
Her tower stands proudly on the hill,
Yet the strange chough that home hath found,
The lamb lies sleeping on the ground.
 'Come to thy God in time,'
 Should be her answering chime;

‘Come to thy God at last,’
Should echo on the blast.

The ship rode down with courses free,
The daughter of a distant sea,
Her sheet was loose, her anchor stored,
The merry Bottreaux bells on board.

‘Come to thy God in time,’
Rung out Tintagel chime ;
‘Youth, manhood, old age past,
Come to thy God at last.’

The pilot heard his native bells
Hang on the breeze in fitful spells.
‘Thank God,’ with reverent brow, he cried,
‘We make the shore with evening’s tide.’

‘Come to thy God in time,’
It was his marriage chime ;
‘Youth, manhood, old age past,
Come to thy God at last.’

‘Thank God, thou whining knave, on land,
But thank at sea the steersman’s hand,’
The captain’s voice above the gale,
‘Thank the good ship and ready sail.’

‘Come to thy God in time,’
Sad grew the boding chime ;
‘Come to thy God at last,’
Boomed heavy on the blast.

Up rose that sea, as if it heard
The mighty Master’s signal word.
What thrills the captain’s whitening lip ?
The death-groans of his sinking ship.

‘Come to thy God in time,’
Swung deep the funeral chime,

‘Grace, mercy, kindness past—
Come to thy God at last.’

Long did the rescued pilot tell,
When grey hairs o’er his forehead fell,
While those around would hear and weep,
That fearful judgment of the deep.

‘Come to thy God in time,’
He read his native chime ;
‘Youth, manhood, old age past,
Come to thy God at last.’

Still when the storm of Bottreaux’s waves
Is waking in his weedy caves,
Those bells, that sullen surges hide,
Peal their deep tones beneath the tide.

‘Come to thy God in time,’
Thus saith the ocean chime ;
‘Storm, whirlwind, billow past,
Come to thy God at last.’”

Mr. Coulson Kernahan says one of the best known legends of Brittany is that of the lost town of Is, which at some unknown period was engulfed by the sea. The fishermen point out, to this day, the site of this fabled city, and assure you that on days of calm they can hear the sound of bells coming up from the deeps, intoning the hymn for the day. Mr. Kernahan has made the legend the subject of some charming lines which he calls “A Ballade of Bells,” and it is as follows :—

“ When the white moon’s mysteries shift and shimmer
 Athwart the shadows the sea that shroud,
And chill, cold skies like an ice-plain glimmer,
 With steely star, and with rifting cloud—
The peasant-maiden, the grey cliff climbing,
 Turns to listen with eyes that glow,
For across the waters she hears the chiming
 Of sea-swayed bells from the depths below ;
And it haunts her ever, and leaves her never,
 The sad, sweet song from the depths below.

From the crowned belfry the bells were chiming
 In quaint old Bruges, as I stood below,
And the air was rilling with rippling rhyming,
 That fell and fluttered like flakes of snow ;
And my heart still rings with that joyous jangling,
 That fairy music, ærial song,
And the sweet uproar, and the silvern twangling—
 I hear it still in the world’s wide throng ;
And it haunts me ever, and leaves me never,
 The glad, clear carol, the silvern song.”

The following poem by the Rev. Canon Wilton, M.A., the vicar of Londesborough, and author of several much appreciated volumes of poetry, does not refer especially to lost chimes, but to a Yorkshire village with its church washed away by the sea. “Washed away by the sea” is the epitaph of many a village on the East coast of England. The poem is from “Lyrics : Sylvan and Sacred,” but it has been revised by the author. On maps of East

Yorkshire where Bridlington Bay is now shown, we read: "Here stood Auburn which was washed away by the sea." Mr. Wilton calls his poem "Auburn":—

 "Here Auburn stood
By pleasant fields surrounded,
Where now for centuries the ocean flood
With melancholy murmur has resounded.

 Here Auburn stood
Where now the seabird hovers—
Here stretched the shady lane and sheltering wood,
The twilight haunt of long-forgotten lovers.

 The village spire
Here raised its silent finger,
Sweet bells were heard and voice of rustic choir
Where now the pensive chimes of ocean linger.

 Dear white-faced homes
Stood around in happy cluster,
Warm and secure where the rude breaker foams,
And winter winds with angry billows bluster.

 Here in still graves
Reposed the dead of ages,
When lo ! with rush of desecrating waves,
Through the green churchyard the loud tempest rages.

 Here Auburn stood
Till washed away by ocean,
Whose waters smile to-day in careless mood
O'er its whelmed site, and dance with merry motion.

 Here now we stand
'Mid life's dear comforts dwelling ;

Soon we shall pass—Oh for a Saviour's hand
When round our 'earthly house' Death's waves are
swelling."

According to Thornber, the local historian, opposite the Cross-Slack, on the sands near Blackpool, out at sea, once stood the church and cemetery of Kilgrimol, long since submerged. Many tales are told of benighted wanderers near the spot being terrified with the sound of bells pealing dismal chimes o'er the murmuring sea.*

Some curious bits of old-world lore have been collected by Mr. Daniel Scott, and he says that there is a tradition at Kirksanton, Cumberland, respecting buried bells. He says there is a basin or hollow, in the surface of the ground, assigned as a place where once stood a church that was swallowed up by the earth opening, and then closing over it bodily. It used to be believed by the country people that on Sunday mornings the bells could be heard far down in the earth, by the simple expedient of placing the ear to the ground. In the same county is a similar legend recorded of Fisherty Brow, Kirkby Lonsdale. It is stated a curious kind of natural hollow scooped out, where, ages ago, a church and parson, and congregation

* Thornber's "History of Blackpool."

were swallowed up by the earth. Ever since this terrible affair it is asserted that the church bells have been regularly heard to ring every Sunday morning.*

Respecting Raleigh, in Nottinghamshire, is a similar legend. It was customary on Christmas morning for the villagers to visit a valley where the church had formerly stood before being submerged, to put their ears to the ground and listen to the chimes of the buried bells.

WILLIAM ANDREWS.

* Scott's "Bygone Cumberland and Westmorland," 1899.



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